Angara, Drilon, Roco explain roles in coco deal

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2001 ★ 108 PAGES 9 SECTIONS VOL.17 NO. 6 ₱15

Negotiations no longer an option

TORA BORA, Afghanistan—Afghan militiamen, backed by massive US air strikes, yesterday launched a fresh ground assault on Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida fighters in the east Afghan highlands.

The surrender of Bin Laden's fighters was no longer an option, a local commander warned.

"There are no more negotiations," Haji Mohammad Zaman said as he climbed aboard a

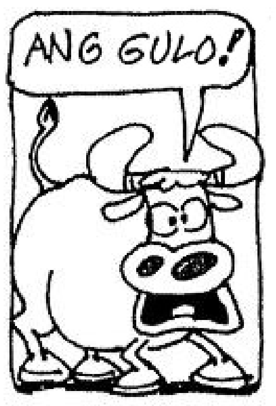
NEGOTIATIONS/ A18

Only Gadhafi knows what year it is

TRIPOLI, Libya—A headline about the Gadhafi era: "From 1969 to 1369—the dawn of the 33rd year."

No, the editors of the daily Al-

ONLY/ A17



Coco feud in GMA hands

PCGG opposes Danding's $540-M Kirin deal

BY GIL CABACUNGAN JR.

SAN MIGUEL Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. will bring top officials of Kirin Co. Ltd. to Malacañang today to present his plan to sell 15 percent of SMC to the Japanese beer giant for $540 million.

In a letter to Malacañang (a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER), Cojuangco had requested a private meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo after the SMC board meeting this morning to approve the Kirin deal.

Cojuangco defended the deal by noting that the purchase price of $540 million was one-and-a-half times the total foreign direct investments made in the Philippines so far this year.

He added that the entry of Kirin would make the alliance the biggest brewer in Asia and the Top 5 in the world.

Cojuangco is to introduce to the President SMC's new partners represented by Kirin president Koichiro Aramaki and chief operating officer Shigeki Ohta.

But Haydee Yorac, chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), has vowed to block the sale because it would diminish the value of the PCGG-sequestered shares in the company, which the government is duty-bound to protect, and unfairly hand over control to Cojuangco.

PCGG has made a counter-offer

COCO/ A18

FOR THE BOYS

What better to give war-weary troops than actress Giselle Sanchez (left) singing and dancing with an Army officer during the "Handog sa Sundalo," Christmas show at the Southern Command Headquarters in Zamboanga City. (Right) A soldier needs a lap in trying times. (Above) Dancing away the Abus. (Below) The show must go on no matter how heavy the downpour.

CHARLIE SACEDA/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

RP forms elite team to fetch Nur in KL

BY NORMAN BORDADORA AND DONA Z. PAZZIBUGAN

RENEGADE Moro leader Nur Misuari could be deported from Malaysia by Dec. 20, a highly placed source at the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

The source said a composite team made up of representatives of the DFA and other government agencies would take custody of Misuari in Kuala Lumpur upon his deportation.

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. met yesterday with officials concerned with the political preparations and security measures for Misuari's arrival.

"We have discussed measures so that protocol will be observed once he is transferred (from Malaysia to the Philippines)," Guingona told reporters in an ambush interview at the DFA headquarters, where the top-level meeting was held.

"Justice will take its due course,"

RP/ A18

'Executing Erap will make him a martyr'

BY ARMAND N. NOCUM

IMAGINE ousted President Joseph Estrada as a martyr following his execution by lethal injection.

This scenario could happen, warned a renowned international, anti-capital punishment advocate if the former President is convicted of plunder and sentenced to death.

Oxford Prof. Roger G. Hood, who was invited to speak about the capital punishment in Congress, said this had been Britain's experience in its long years of conflict with the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

No matter the IRA's violent acts against the British, Hood said few people called for the execution of

EXECUTING/ A18

'STRICTLY CORPORATE LAWYERING'

Angara, Drilon, Roco explain roles in coco deal

BY CYNTHIA D. BALANA AND DONNA S. CUETO

BREAKING his silence on the ownership of 31 percent of San Miguel Corp., Sen. Edgardo Angara yesterday said he could not reveal confidential information about clients of the Accra law firm.

Angara is a founding partner of the law firm, which put up 14 holding firms to buy 31 percent of San Miguel using the levy collected from coconut farmers from 1973 to 1982.

He said his role in San Miguel transactions was "strictly corporate lawyering" although he maintained that the investments of the holding firms in the food and beverage giant were made on behalf of coconut farmers.

Angara was reacting to a call by Haydee Yorac, chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), that Accra lawyers reveal the real owners of the holding firms.

He said he was not sure of the point being raised by Yorac as records of the case showed that the coco levy funds were invested in San Miguel on behalf of the coconut farmers.

ANGARA/ A18

Abu hostages sought help of Teddyboy

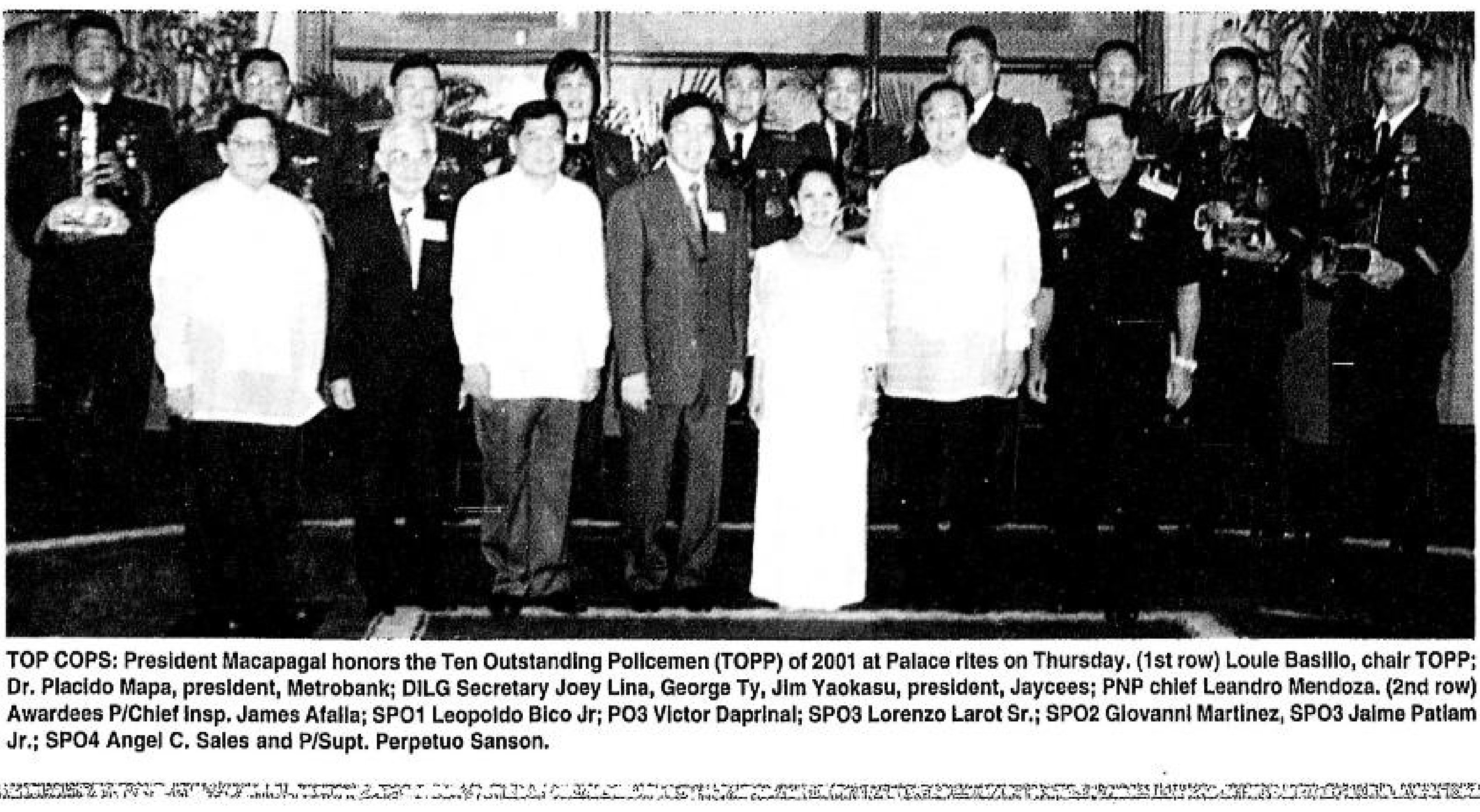
BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

A FIRST-TERM congressman yesterday admitted helping in the release of a hostage of the Abu Sayyaf, but denied that his help had anything to do with the payment of ransom.

"Yes, it is me," said Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. when the INQUIRER phoned him yesterday to ask whether he knew the legislator cited by Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo I as the one asked to help in the release of then hostage Angela Montealegre.

But Locsin, who is also publisher of the newspaper Today, stressed that he helped only to appeal to the Abu Sayyaf to release Montealegre

ABU/ A19



TOP COPS: President Macapagal honors the Ten Outstanding Policemen (TOPP) of 2001 at Palace rites on Thursday. (1st row) Louie Basilio, chair TOPP; Dr. Placido Mapa, president, Metrobank; DILG Secretary Joey Lina, George Ty, Jim Yaokasu, president, Jaycees; PNP chief Leandro Mendoza. (2nd row) Awardees P/Chief Insp. James Afalla; SPO1 Leopoldo Bico Jr; PO3 Victor Daprinal; SPO3 Lorenzo Larot Sr.; SPO2 Giovanni Martinez, SPO3 Jaime Patiam Jr.; SPO4 Angel C. Sales and P/Supt. Perpetuo Sanson.

GMA blinks on rent control law

BY CARLITO PABLO, ROCKY NAZARENO AND JULIET JAVELLANA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo apparently does not want to risk incurring the ire of lower- and middle-class dwellers that may have to pay higher rent for their homes next year.

"(Ms Macapagal) will not oppose any move by Congress to extend the Rent Control Law," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

And several senators are apparently not also willing to take the political risk of alienating the middle class.

Administration Sen. Ralph Recto has joined opposition Senators Aquilino Pimentel, Robert Jaworski and Rodolfo Biazon in pushing for

GMA/ A7

MAHINANG EBIDENSIYA DAW SI FRANCISCO!

Evidence is weak–Desierto

By Michael Lim Ubac
and Christine O. Avendaño

OMBUDSMAN Aniano Desierto said yesterday lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr. must come up with stronger evidence if he wants Desierto impeached for allegedly taking a bribe.

This after Francisco presented receipts last Wednesday to show that someone from the Ombudsman's office had signed for beta camera parts that were ostensibly part of a bribe paid to Desierto by a former client of Francisco's, banker Luke Roxas.

Desierto said in an interview yesterday the evidence Francisco has been presenting was "weak or polluted evidence, which are inadmissible as evidence in court."

Aside from the camera parts or accessories, Roxas allegedly had given Desierto P400,000 in cash, an amount haggled down from P500,000.

For the money and the camera parts, Desierto was supposed to do nothing in a case involving Roxas' former bank, the Bank of Southeast Asia (BSA), which had been accused of laundering money paid by Petron Corp. to the Bureau of Customs.

Desierto appeared unperturbed by the latest revelation of Francisco.

He said the Ombudsman's office had the money to buy camera equipment, so "why should I ask (for money) from other people? It's very silly... very, very weak evidence," Desierto said.

DESIERTO

Receipts

The receipts were submitted by Francisco to the House committee on justice on Wednesday, after the panel had voted that the former Accra lawyer's impeachment complaint against Desierto was sufficient in form.

The receipts for the purchase of the camera parts were in the name of Desierto's aide, Fernando Timbol, and bore his signature.

Francisco submitted his evidence to Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan, chair of the House committee on justice, which would assess next week if Francisco's complaint against Desierto was "sufficient in substance."

In the interview yesterday, Desierto said he had no part in the transaction between Timbol and Francisco.

"It was between the two of them. Why should the Ombudsman be made answerable for the conversation between (them)?" he asked.

Volunteer

Desierto did not disown Timbol, however, saying the latter had been helping the Ombudsman's office in its media affairs. "He helps our office as a volunteer but not for pay," he added.

Desierto pointed out that Timbol did not deny receiving the camera parts when he asked him about it.

"He even executed an affidavit admitting that he had accepted the video equipment," Desierto said.

"But they were given to him (by Francisco) because Timbol had been hired (by Roxas) to cover special events for Roxas' real estate firms and banks," Desierto claimed.

Timbol, he said, received a battery pack and other camera parts.

Desierto said Timbol was already a freelance cameraman before they met.

"He told me it was pure professional work. He owned a camera, so he asked Roxas to buy him just the accessories," Desierto said.

Audio tape

Earlier, Francisco had played for reporters an audio tape purportedly of a conversation between Francisco and Roxas on Oct. 26 in which the businessman talked about the alleged bribe to Desierto.

Francisco, who said he was an active participant in the bribery, revealed it was he who had purchased the betacam parts for Timbol.

Francisco said Timbol had told him Desierto had agreed to help them in the case involving BSA but they had to give him a gift "he would not easily forget."

Francisco submitted sales invoices from Solid Video Corp. dated Aug. 26, 1997 that were in Timbol's name. The receipts were for betacam parts costing P149,372 and P39,207.80

Two other receipts from MQ Lighting Enterprises dated Aug. 26, 1997 were also in the name of Timbol.

Most of the receipts bore Timbol's signature.

In a related development, Argee Guevarra of Arm the Lawyer said that contrary to a published report on Tuesday, his group and running priest Robert Reyes support Francisco and not Desierto in the bribery charges.

"What (evidence) Francisco has presented is more than enough to sustain his allegations," Guevarra said.

He said Francisco himself was "the best evidence against Desierto."

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Erratum

The caption of the Page 1 photo of the Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) awardees, which appeared in the INQUIRER yesterday, did not mention the name of Jimmy Yaokasin Jr., national president of the Philippine Jaycees. He was erroneously identified in the caption supplied by Malacañang as Enrique Filamor. Our apologies.

NIDA BLANCA PROBE

'Inconsistencies' noted in statements of hubby, aide

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is reviewing some "inconsistencies" in the statements of Nida Blanca's husband, Rod Lauren Strunk, and aide Elena de la Paz.

De la Paz passed the lie detector test she took on Tuesday and Strunk finished his 12-page sworn statement after 13 hours of grilling by NBI agents.

"They are being processed for verification. There are some inconsistencies," the source said, adding that the bureau is still trying to schedule Strunk's turn at the polygraph machine.

He said De la Paz claimed that Blanca and Strunk had a "warm relationship" but that was apparently false.

De la Paz also claimed that she did not know how to use Blanca's cellular phone but the source said the actress even left it with her and "records showed that she made some calls."

Four employees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.—a man and three women—went to the NBI late yesterday afternoon. They were expected to be interviewed to verify if De la Paz really went looking for Blanca at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque on the night of Nov. 6 when the actress was killed.

De la Paz passed the lie detector test after she was asked if she knew of Blanca's killing in advance, if she participated in Blanca's murder, or if she knew the killers. She answered in the negative.

Another NBI investigator said Strunk and his lawyers tried to evade "a few questions" during his grilling.

"They did not want to elaborate on some questions," the source said.

He said the bureau would check Strunk's statements, including his claim that twice he went out of their residence in White Plains to search for his wife on the night Blanca was killed.

The investigators also said they would still seek to have Strunk undergo a lie-detector test.

He said Strunk was at the NBI for around 13 hours (he arrived around 12:20 p.m. at the bureau and finished around 1:30 a.m. yesterday) because they wanted to ask all the questions that they needed to ask.

He added that Strunk's lawyers also asked for breaks four times to eat and confer with each other. Each break lasted for as short as 15 minutes up to two hours, the source added.

"The NBI has been professional, courteous and intense. I have all the confidence in the world that they are going to solve it," Strunk told reporters after his long interview.

But Strunk noted that there is little for investigators to work with, as the "drastic murder of my precious wife left very little clues."

He also asked the NBI to make sure it gets the right persons, and not some fall guy.

"If we catch some fall guy... (Blanca's) death would be in vain," Strunk said.

Meanwhile, the family of missing businessman Mike Martinez sought the help of the NBI in finding the trader, who was reportedly abducted near his home in Parañaque on Nov. 19.

Martinez's wife Estrellita, and other relatives met with NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco and NCR chief Edmundo Arugay.

Martinez was reportedly abducted at 7 a.m. of Nov. 19, five hours before police investigators linked him to the Blanca murder in a press conference.

Police claimed that Martinez was the go-between who helped Strunk hire Philip Medel Jr. to kill Blanca. But Medel retracted his statement.

A source said the family asked for the bureau's help because they doubt that the police could still solve Martinez's disappearance. A Quezon City court had granted the Martinez family's petition for writ of habeas corpus, but the police insisted they don't have custody of Martinez.

"We can now start our investigation since they've now asked us formally," the investigator said.

He added that the NBI already has under its possession statements of bystanders who allegedly saw the abduction, the plate number of suspects' vehicle, and a sketch of a woman who was seen roaming the vicinity of Martinez's house several times before he was abducted.

Officer sues Medel for libel

By A. Donato

TASK Force Marsha spokesperson Leonardo Espina yesterday filed a P10-million libel suit against Philip Medel Jr., the Philippine National Police's primary suspect in the Nida Blanca murder case.

Senior Supt. Espina filed the criminal charge against Medel before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for accusing him before the media of maltreating missing suspect Michael Martinez inside the headquarters of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) in Camp Crame.

Medel had confessed to the killing but later retracted the confession, claiming that police officials had tortured him.

In the complaint affidavit, the police official cited a Nov. 26 television interview of Medel in which the latter claimed that he personally saw how Espina punched Martinez on the night after he was presented to the media (Nov. 19).

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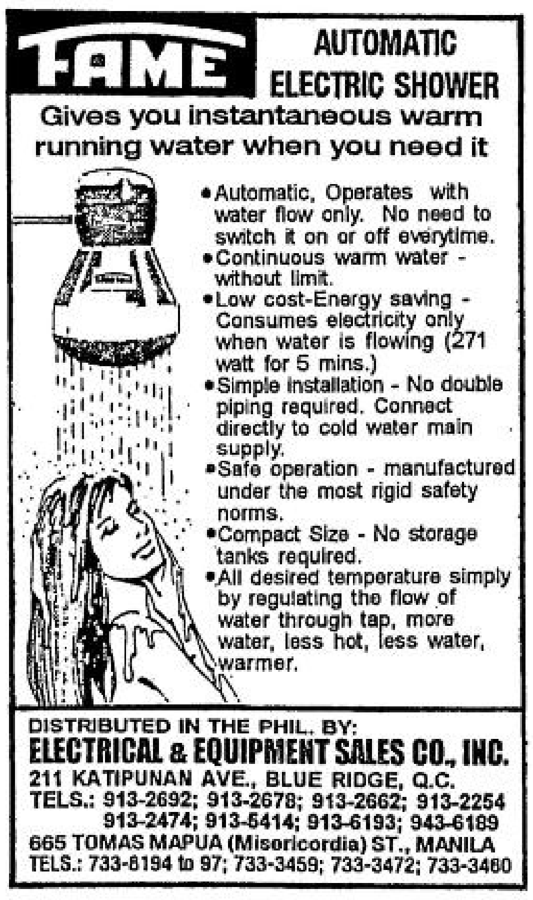
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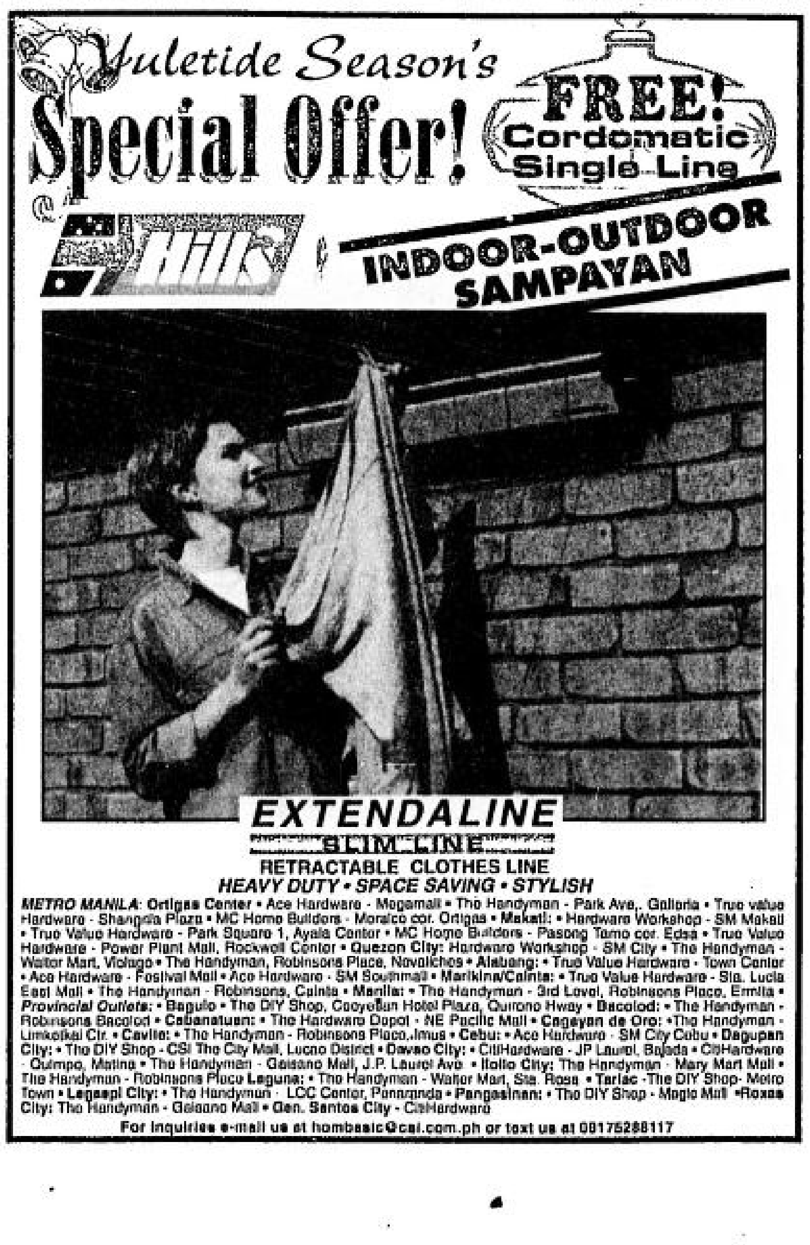
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No demands, just overtures –Marcelo

BY R. NAZARENO

TELECOM scam witness Pacifico Marcelo has gone from directly accusing President Macapagal-Arroyo of demanding control of his Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. to merely "making overtures in that direction."

In a press release distributed at the Senate Wednesday, Marcelo complained that the investigation into his charges against Ms Macapagal "is now a political issue when all I raised was a complaint against people in power wanting to take over my business."

"My issue is that the President's men wanted 51 percent of my company and the President herself made overtures in that direction," Marcelo said.

He added that "in the middle of this political war, I am ending up the accused."

"Overtures? It surely did not sound that way the first time he stepped forward with his complaint," said Sen. Francis Pangilinan in reaction to Marcelo's statement.

Pangilinan said the statement did not gibe with Marcelo's assertions in the last two hearings of the Senate blue ribbon committee.

"(Marcelo) made it clear during the hearings that the President had asked him for 51 percent ownership of PCCI. Now he says these were only overtures? What is really true?" Pangilinan said.

Sen. Robert Barbers had said he was considering filing perjury charges against Marcelo for allegedly lying to the blue ribbon committee, after the panel wraps up its investigation next week.

Marcelo had claimed that he came out with his complaint because he had lost some contracts with the government and the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. due to pressure from Malacañang.

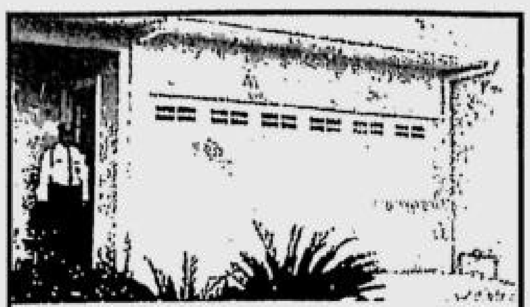
Pangilinan said that since Marcelo now says that Ms Macapagal had merely made "overtures," his complaint is no longer "un-rebutted" as opposition senators had maintained.

The opposition had said Ms Macapagal should appear before the Senate to rebut Marcelo's accusations.

"Marcelo himself has rebutted his own statement so I think this puts to rest the need for the President to appear (in the Senate)," Pangilinan said.

But in another statement to the press on Thursday, Marcelo charged Pangilinan and Barbers with "expressing an unnatural desire for the investigation to be concluded at the soonest possible time."

"This has led me to ask if the committee had heard enough testimonies and examined the controversy thoroughly. Why have they not allowed the Chief Executive herself to dispute my narrative, when they said it was her word against mine," Marcelo said.



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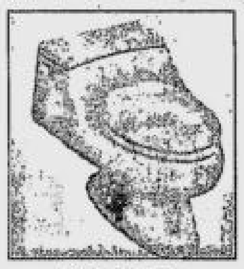
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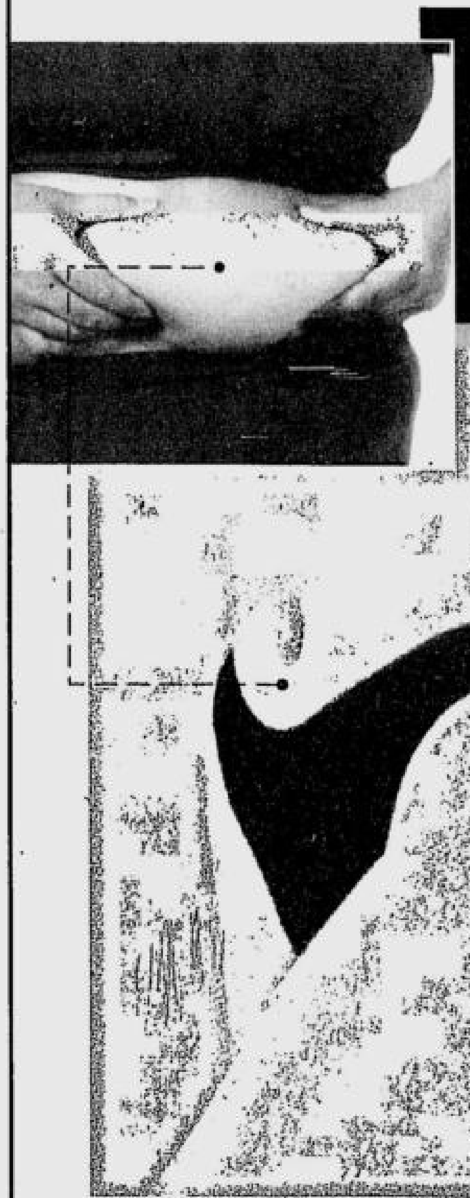

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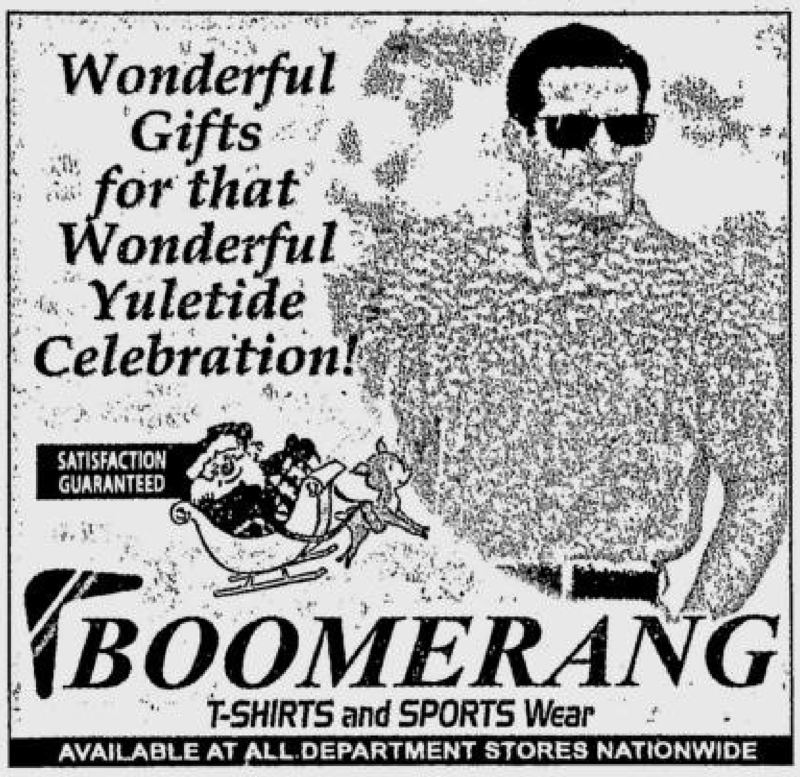
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No suicide for me–Badoy

"I HAVE no plans of committing suicide."

This was Justice Anacleto D. Badoy Jr.'s reaction to a Supreme Court ruling Tuesday that he go on indefinite leave from the chairmanship of the Sandiganbayan's Third Division.

Badoy, who was at the Department of Justice building in Manila Wednesday at 7 p.m. to have a legal document notarized by a government lawyer, said he was not shocked at all by the SC order.

"The Supreme Court does not do anything unfairly," he said.

When asked about his health, Badoy said he had been under sedation on orders of his doctors, "but I'm okay now. I'm not sick anymore."

Badoy asked the SC yesterday to give him three more days to submit a "clearer" and more complete "explanation" to the high tribunal's questions about his conduct and neutrality.

Badoy said he had been taking medication with sedative effects and he had just begun to work on the comment requested by the SC, "while still weak from so many days of medication."

Badoy had already submitted a compliance with the high court defending himself against accusations of improper conduct when he was rushed to a hospital by ambulance by way of GMA Channel 7 for an interview on Nov. 29.

Badoy said there was a "compelling need" for the use of the ambulance in going to GMA 7. He said his deteriorating physical condition required it.

Badoy also defended his live interview over Channel 7, saying the "gravity of the situation" compelled him to go on air to inform the public about a missing "unpromulgated" ruling. *Michael Lim Ubac*

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THE LANDMARK
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Christmas leave only for soldiers, Estradas told

A CHRISTMAS furlough applies only to members of the armed services and not to detainees like deposed President Joseph Estrada and his son, Jinggoy.

State prosecutors yesterday formally opposed the Estradas' request to spend the Christmas holidays at their respective Greenhills, San Juan residences.

The Estradas had asked the Sandiganbayan Third Division, which is hearing their trial for plunder, for an 11-day furlough from detention from Dec. 23 to Jan. 3.

The prosecutors led by Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said the request had "no legal basis and no legal precedent."

"In our jurisdiction, a Christmas furlough is applicable only to one in the armed service of the country," their two-page opposition said.

"Granting them a furlough now will be in conflict with the court's earlier denial of their motion for house arrest," the motion said, adding that "(a) Christmas furlough partakes of a fractional house arrest."

The Estradas have been held in detention at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City since their arrest on plunder and other criminal charges early this year.

"At no time in the history of the country has a prisoner being tried for a capital offense been allowed to go on a Christmas vacation," the opposition said.

Granting the Estradas' plea would set a "bad precedent" for other detention prisoners who might seek the same accommodation from the courts, the motion added.

Aside from a Christmas furlough, the elder Estrada has also asked the courts to allow him to travel abroad for knee surgery.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 14, 2001
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading: *Is 48:17-19*
Gospel: *Mt 11:16-19*

Jesus said to the crowds, "Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplace, about whom their companions complain: 'We played the flute for you but you would not dance. We sang a funeral-song but you would not cry!'

For John came fasting and people said: 'He is possessed.' Then the Son of Man came, he ate and drank, and people said: 'Look at this man! A glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet the outcome will prove Wisdom to be right."

Commentary:

It seems this generation of ours is only capable of waiting for the latest model of cellular phones in the market. Smaller, more powerful or cheaper. This marks the end of our horizon. We care less about the rest. We already know everything. We have every reason to justify everything and to justify ourselves before everything. "But events attest to the Wisdom of God." These "events", always persistent, are the victims themselves, those who suffer in this society. They are the one and true reason why we should continue to hope for something more than the latest item offered in the market. Only the faces of these victims may rekindle our hope in God.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW—BILL OF RIGHTS)—When seizure of evidence in plain view is justified—The police may seize without warrant illegally possessed firearm or any contraband for that matter, inadvertently found in plain view. However, the seizure of evidence in plain view applies only where the police officer is not searching for evidence against the accused, but inadvertently comes across an incriminating object. Specifically, seizure of evidence in plain view is justified when there is; (a) a prior valid intrusion based on the valid warrantless arrest in which the police are legally present in the pursuit of their official duties; (b) the evidence was inadvertently discovered by the police who had the right to be where they are; (c) the evidence must be immediately apparent; and (d) plain view justified mere seizure of evidence without further search. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, Del Rosario v. People, G.R. No. 142294, May 31, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

RP facing garbage 'time bomb'–WB

A HUMUNGOUS garbage problem in the Philippines is a ticking time bomb which may cause serious health and environmental problems unless it is addressed soon, a World Bank report said yesterday.

It found that only 70 percent of the garbage in urban areas and 40 percent in rural areas is collected.

Just two percent of the solid waste in the Philippines is disposed of in controlled garbage dumps or sanitary landfills and the rest is "left to rot in open uncontrolled dumps."

The closure of two major garbage dumps in Metro Manila, a metropolis of 10.5 million people, due to environmental concerns and the failure to open new sites due to local opposition has caused garbage to pile up, the report said.

The World Bank added that only five percent of the country's hazardous waste is recycled or properly treated.

The Philippines is expected to generate about 10 million tons of garbage this year, rising by 40 percent or even higher by 2010 if economic or urban growth exceeds forecasts.

Environment specialist Patchamuthu Illagovan, head of the team that worked on the report, warned that "time is running out" as the amount of garbage produced in the Philippines increases and little progress is made in developing safe disposal facilities.

"Proper disposal facilities that include recycling, composting and sanitary landfilling should be urgently implemented," Illagovan warned.

The report called for better enforcement and incentives for garbage regulations and urged that an additional P150 billion over the next 10 years be found to enforce waste-disposal laws.

It said the refusal of local communities to host disposal facilities and public awareness of solid waste management needed to be addressed.

AFP

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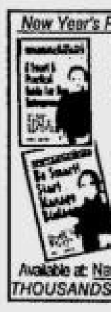

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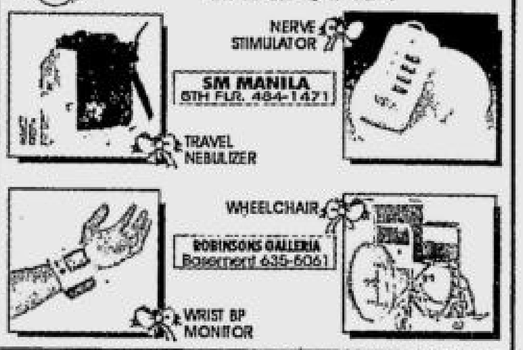
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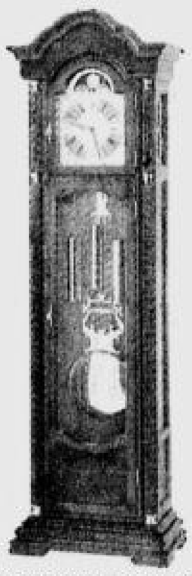
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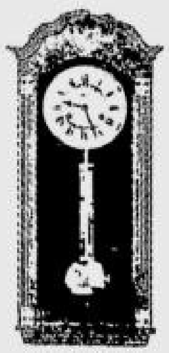
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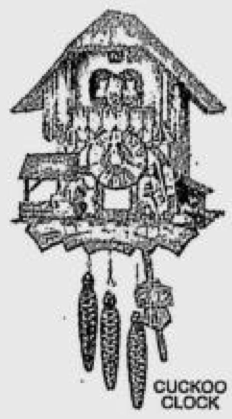
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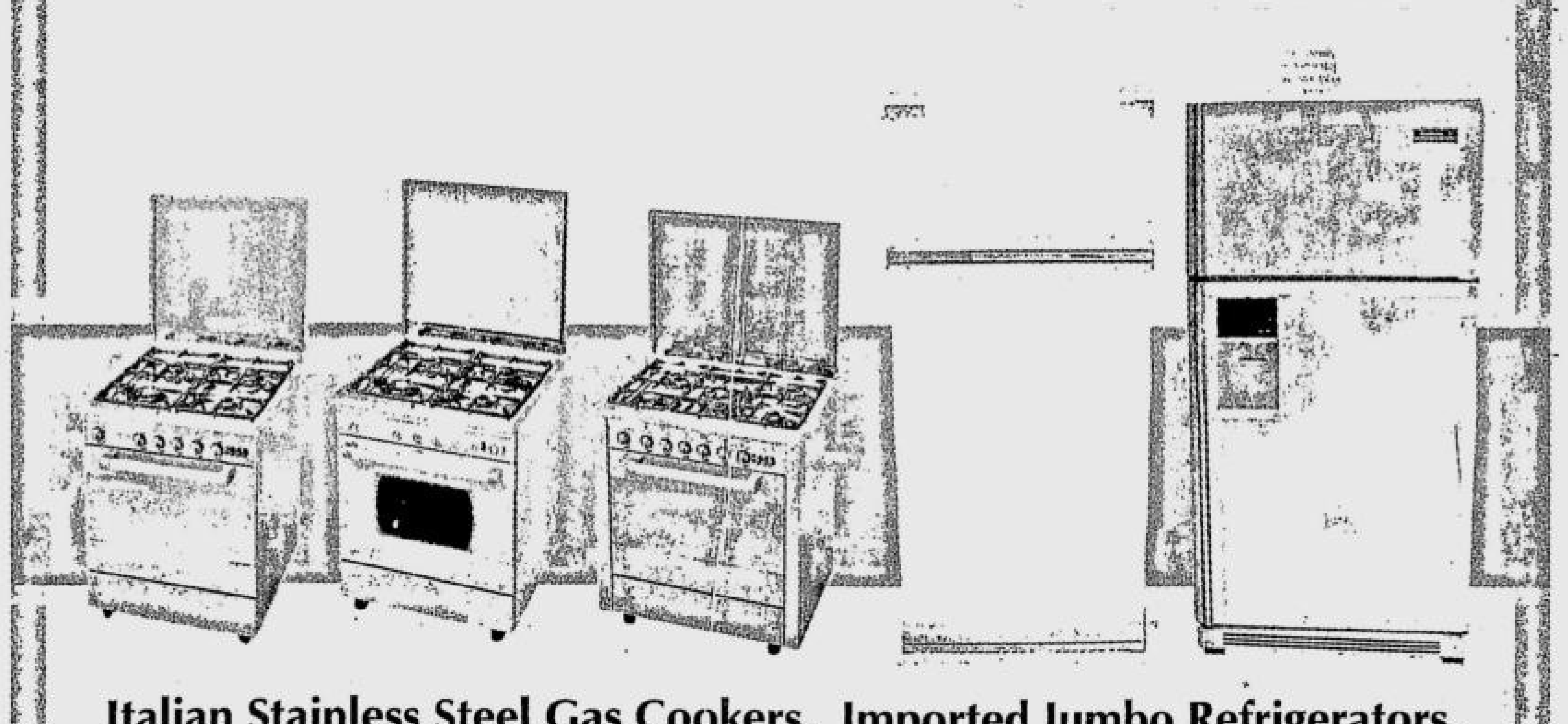

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CONCEPCION INDUSTRIES

1 in 4 Pinays had abortion

ONE in four women in the mainly Roman Catholic Philippines has had an induced abortion, mainly after being forced to have sex by their demanding partners, population control authorities said yesterday.

"Sexual relations, child bearing and child rearing are still dependent on men as the ultimate decision makers" in Filipino households, the Population Commission said in a statement.

The situation is complicated by a ban on abortions, forcing women with unwanted pregnancies to go to unlicensed or unregulated abortion clinics.

"Due to lack of options, women risk legal and religious condemnation and even permanent disabilities and the possibility of death to commit or seek out abortions," the commission said.

Citing results of a national population survey last year, the government agency said "one out of every four women had induced abortions, and a range of 80,000 to 120,000 end up being hospitalized."

The commission said 36 out of every 1,000 babies in the Philippines die as a result of the endangered health of mothers, while 172 per 100,000 mothers die from pregnancy-related complications.

Contraceptive use, which is banned by the Catholic Church, fell to 47 percent of Filipino women last year compared to 49 percent in 1999, the survey found.

While many women want to postpone having another child, they are "married to men who want another child soon."

"This situation deprives women of their liberty to negotiate more freely and decisively on when to have children, and even when to have sex." *AFP*

Napocor chief faces plunder charges

'TIS the season for plunder cases.

This time, it's against outgoing National Power Corp. president Jesus Alcordo, who is facing accusations before the Office of the Ombudsman for the allegedly anomalous release of P470 million in Napocor funds to "bribe" the past Congress to pass the Electric Power Industry Act.

The case, recently filed by lawyer Cesar Jimenea Jr. and the Crusaders Against Graft and Corruption in NPC, a watchdog employees group, charged Alcordo, NPC corporate secretary Alberto Pangcog, and other NPC officials with having defrauded and plundered the coffers of NPC in the amount of P470 million.

Alcordo recently resigned as Napocor chief effective the end of the year and his resignation has been accepted by Malacañang.

The Power Bill was ratified by the House of Representatives on May 31, this year, the last day of the three-day special session called by President Macapagal with the Power Bill on top of the agenda.

Documents submitted to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto alleged that at the start of the special session on May 28 this year, NPC released some P470 million to fund district power projects proposed by congressmen under the "O Ilaw" rural electrification program hatched by the Estrada administration.

Virtually shelved after it was launched in October 2000, the "O Ilaw" program was suddenly switched on when Congress convened for its May 28 to 31 special session.

The P470 million was released without the approval of the NPC board.

At the time of the fund transfer, there were 149 pending congressional requests for rural certification fund under the "O Ilaw" program.

Pinoys no better off today

By R. Nazareno

FILIPINOS are no better off today than they were 21 years ago.

This much is readily obvious, but by how much they are not better off is staggering.

Sen. Ralph Recto said yesterday the country's per capita income today is P12,913, which hardly rose from the P12,595 it was in 1980.

In today's pesos, the P318 increase in 21 years amounts to nothing at all. In value, per capita income has dropped considerably.

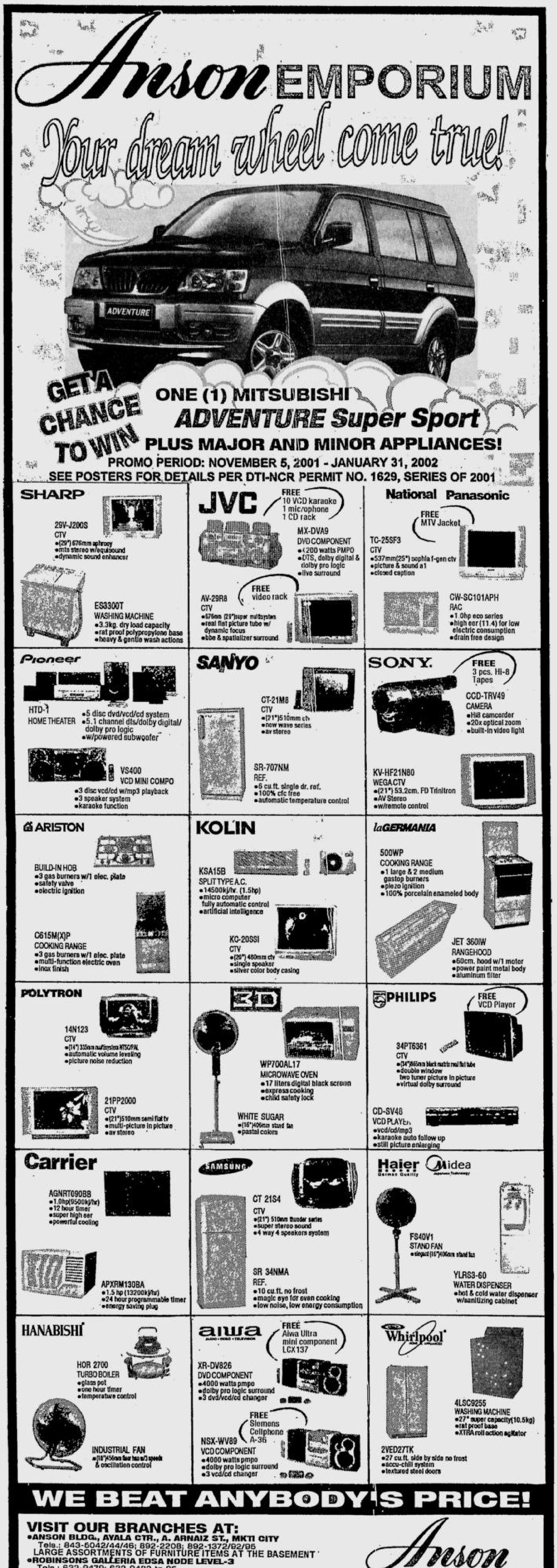
Recto pointed this out in his interpellation of Senate finance committee chair John Osmeña at yesterday's hearing on the proposed 2002 national budget.

He said the government has maintained "e old way of doing things, (with) excessive borrowings, more taxes, higher interest rates, skewed spending for agriculture and the interminable budgetary support to government corporations."

"The executive department submitted a national expenditures program no different from that of previous administrations," Recto said.

"We want government to bring forth new ideas and alternative bold measures to combat poverty, unemployment, hunger, homelessness and ignorance," he said.

He pointed out that the peso has depreciated by as much as 1,373 percent against the dollar since 1960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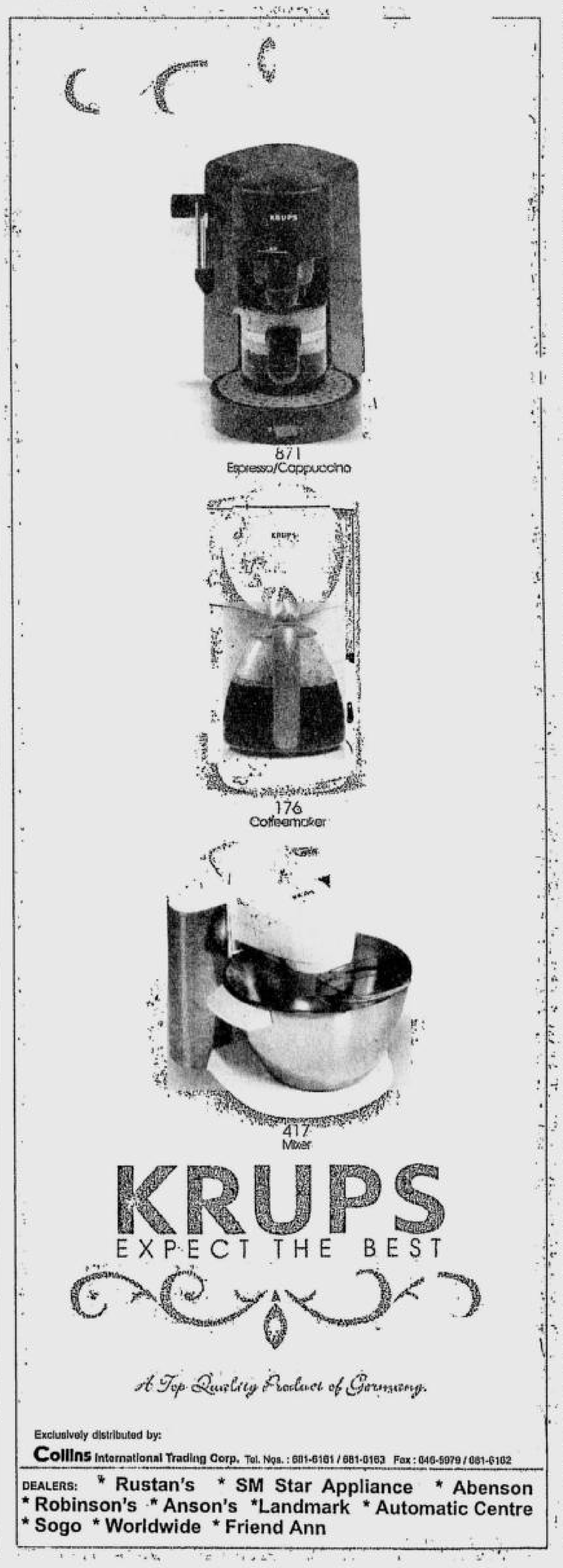
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GMA blinks on rent control law

(From page A1)

the passage of a measure that would extend rent control beyond Dec. 31.

But the senators will have to act fast if they want the Rent Control Law extended. Congress has only six session days remaining before it goes on Christmas break.

And the President still has to decide whether to certify the bill as an urgent piece of legislation.

According to Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, such certification will exempt the measure from the three-day printing requirement after ratification by both houses. The law can then be enacted before the present Rent Control Law, Republic Act No. 8437, expires on Dec. 31.

Ms Macapagal, in an ambush interview in Magalang, Pampanga yesterday, said she was leaving the fate of the measure "up to the wisdom of Congress."

Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Michael Defensor said he and Ms Macapagal spoke about the socially sensitive issue "and the President clearly stated that the bill was in the Senate committee and that if the Senate will approve it, then she will sign it."

Tiglao said the other day that the President does not support an extension of the Rent Control Law because it was not sound economic policy. The Legislative and Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) had agreed that putting a cap on how much rent increase apartment and building owners can impose would be a "disincentive" to future investors in the housing industry.

Rent hike

In the Senate now lies the fate of 5.5 million Filipinos (equivalent to 917,051 households based on 1990 figures from the National Statistics Office) who are renting apartments and other dwellings.

Sen. Ralph Recto had recently filed a bill imposing an 8-percent annual cap on rent increases.

In the House version of the bill authored by Zubiri that was approved in October, increases were limited to 10 percent annually for the next three years. It would cover apartments and other dwellings with a monthly rent of P9,000 and below in urbanized areas and P6,000 and below in rural areas.

In Recto's bill, the cap will cover monthly rentals of P10,000 and below in highly urbanized areas and P6,500 and below in the countryside.

Recto said he would push for the extension of the Rent Control Law, adding that it "would be the one law this year that will benefit large segments of the population in all major cities nationwide."

Senate committee on housing and resettlement chair Francis Pangilinan had earlier said he was not inclined to support the extension of the law because this would discourage the entry of more investors in the housing sector. But Pangilinan said he was willing to accept whatever position the other committee members would take.

Protection

Recto, citing a government report, said rental expense eats up 15 percent of a family's expenditures.

He pointed out that for minimum wage earners, a P4,000 monthly rental already constituted 30 percent of their income "which leaves little else for other basic needs like food, clothing and medicines."

"It will be disheartening if we deprive the low- and middle-income earners an umbrella of protection when we have been granting financial and tax incentives to other sectors like exporters, manufacturers, bankers and even airline companies," Recto said.

Zubiri meanwhile was still hoping the President could be convinced to certify the measure as urgent if the Senate approves the bill.

Zubiri surmised Ms Macapagal had stopped short of certifying the measure due to "pressures from her economic managers."

"Because of pressure from urban groups, Filipinos and politicians who feel this bill is a stopgap measure to help alleviate the plight of our people, maybe the President acceded to our request and I am thankful we were able to reach all the way to Malacañang," Zubiri said.

He said presidential legislative adviser Gabriel Claudio assured him that Malacañang was "trying to come up with a compromise" solution on the matter. *With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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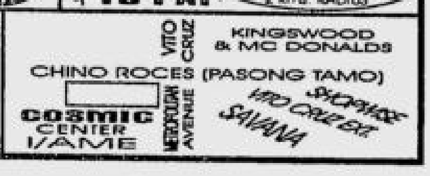

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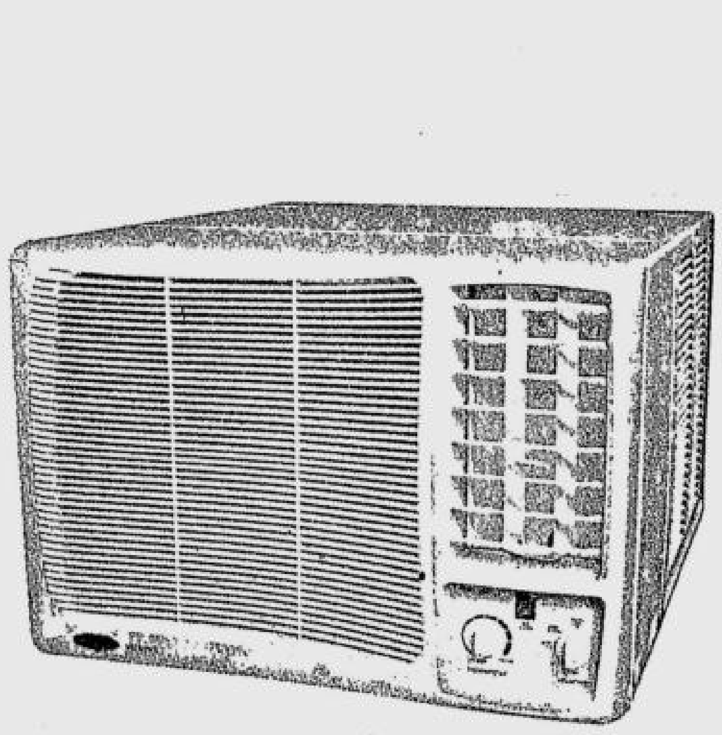

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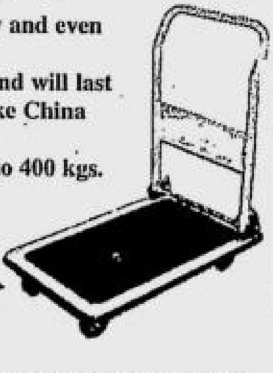

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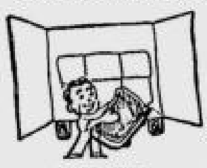

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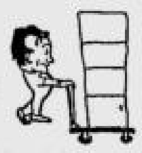

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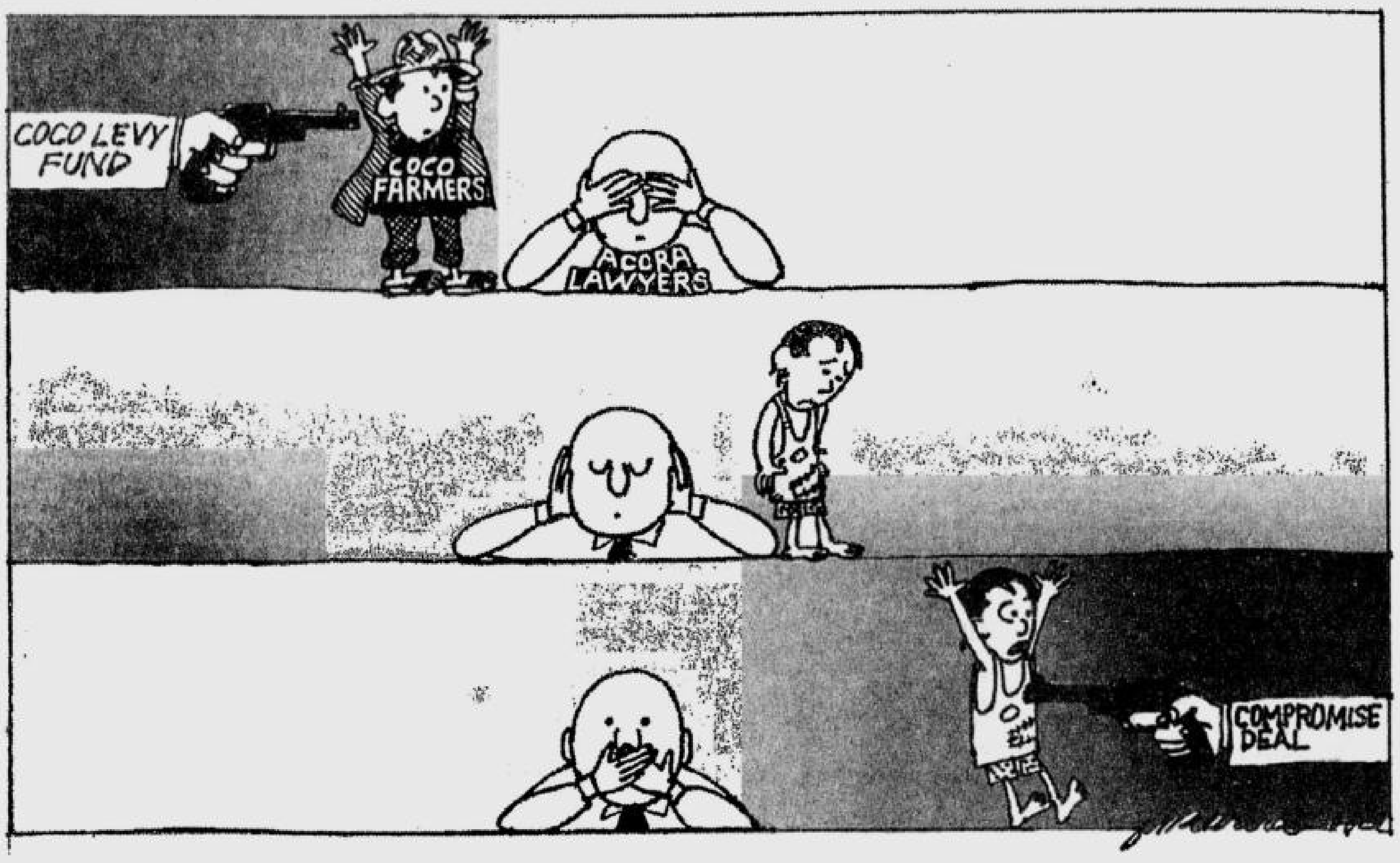

Message from KL

EDITORIAL

NUR Misuari is not going anywhere, except back to the Philippines and to jail, top administration officials are saying. "I don't think the Malaysian government would let Misuari go to a third country without first informing the Philippine government," Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona said Wednesday. Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the same thing: "We have had assurance and we are confident that the Malaysian government will not turn him over to any third party."

How sure are they? And what is the basis for their optimism?

When Misuari was caught sneaking from Sulu into the nearest Malaysian island of Jampiras last Nov. 24, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo quickly announced that she wanted Malaysia to have first crack at dispensing its own brand of justice to the renegade governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The Macapagal administration was apparently counting on Malaysia to throw the book at Misuari for violating not only its immigration laws but also its draconian International Security Act. In fact, the Philippine government accused Misuari of directly aiding the Abu Sayyaf, the bandit group that mounted a daring raid on the upscale Malaysian resort of Sipadan and kidnapped 21 mostly Western tourists and Malaysian workers last year.

At first, Malaysia seemed interested, or at least it didn't indicate any objection to the Philippine government's position. But now all the signals from Malaysia show not only a disinterest in prosecuting Misuari but also a growing exasperation with the Philippine government's indecision with regard to Misuari's repatriation.

Of course, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has studiously avoided giving any hint that Malaysia's patience with the Philippine government is wearing thin. Instead he has heaped all the blame on Misuari, saying, "Why can't he run away somewhere else? Each time he creates trouble back home, he flees to Malaysia. It sours up relations with our neighbors."

However, other Malaysians have been less than diplomatic in expressing what they think. Over the weekend, a top Malaysian police official flatly rejected the Philippine government's allegation that Misuari had a hand in the Sipadan raid, saying there was no evidence linking Misuari to the Abu Sayyaf. But Ms Macapagal was quick to point out that that was only the conclusion of the police. "That's not the level yet of the prime minister," she noted.

If she was expecting Mahathir to disown the police statement, the President must have been disappointed for none was coming. But if she wanted to get a more accurate reading of how the Malaysian government feels about being drawn into what is obviously a Philippine problem, maybe she should listen carefully to what Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi had to say. Badawi told the New Straits Times of Malaysia that while his government would not give asylum to Misuari, the possibility of allowing him to leave for a third country was being discussed "thoroughly." An unnamed Malaysian official was also quoted as saying that if the Philippines didn't want to take back Misuari, "then we can give him safe passage to a third country." The message from Kuala Lumpur to Manila couldn't be any clearer: Either you deal with Misuari or we set him free.

Fair enough. Misuari is a Malaysian problem only because of his presence there. But he is first and last a Philippine problem. It was here where he committed acts of rebellion by ordering his followers to attack military outposts in Sulu, and it is here that he has to answer for the more than 100 deaths that his short-lived rebellion caused. It was here that he committed plunder by failing to account for billions of pesos poured into the regional government, and it is here that he should face the consequences for his mismanagement and greed. He is a fugitive from justice here, and he should be brought back to face trial here.

Given the serious crimes Misuari has committed, it is puzzling that the government seems not too eager to get him back. Is it afraid Misuari would serve as a rallying point for a revival of the MNLF separatist struggle? It should fear even more having Misuari roaming around the Middle East and other Islamic states lobbying for political and financial support. Is it afraid that his followers would try to spring him out of prison? It's difficult to imagine the Moro National Liberation Front gathering thousands of fighters and sailing in their vintas to storm a prison in Luzon.

With Malaysia now saying it doesn't want to deal with Misuari much longer, the only option left for the Philippines is to ask for his repatriation. There never was any other option in the first place.

PAL's response to DOTC's letter on Terminal 3

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PHILIPPINE Airlines had a very quick response to the letter of the Department of Transportation and Communications on the controversy over Terminal 3 which was published here last Wednesday, Dec. 12 (we got PAL's rejoinder that very same evening). We always want to be fair to everybody and give them a chance to have their sides heard. So here are the replies of PAL to the DOTC's claims:

DOTC claim: PAL does not have a valid contract to cover its occupation of Naia 2.

Response: PAL has an agreement for the use and occupation of Naia 2 for the period July 24, 1999 to July 23, 2002 pursuant to the MIAA board resolution awarding the lease of various spaces at the Naia 2 to the airline. PAL has religiously abided by the provisions of this board resolution and is current in its payments for the Naia 2 space rentals and utility charges.

DOTC claim: Lucio Tan wants to stop the Naia 3 project.

Response: There is no truth to the claim. In 1994, President Fidel V. Ramos requested six of the country's leading industrialists to pursue a major project that would benefit the country. In response, Messrs. Alfonso Yuchengco, Henry Sy Sr., John Gokongwei Jr., Andrew Gotianum Sr., George Ty Sr. and Lucio Tan formed a consortium called Asia's Emerging Dragon Corp. (AEDC), where they were equal partners. AEDC proposed to build a modern air terminal as its major project without a monopoly of the entire operations at the terminal complex, both inside and outside.

In his testimony to the House committee on good government last Nov. 20, former AEDC president Antonio Henson recalled that the bid of the AEDC was lower than the bid of the Philippine Air Terminal Corp. (Piatco) because it did not propose a monopoly of services at the Naia 3. The bid of Piatco was higher because its fundamental assumption was the creation of a monopoly of services in and out of the terminal. In 1997, the DOTC accepted the Piatco bid over the objection of the AEDC; the latter subsequently sued to stop the award proceedings. In 1999, believing that the Piatco model of monopoly at the Naia 3 would be disapproved, the AEDC agreed to a joint withdrawal of the case. Since that time, nearly three years ago, the AEDC has not posed any objection to the implementation of the Naia 3 contract.

DOTC claim: Tan is blocking the confirmation of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez.

Response: The basic problem of Secretary Alvarez getting confirmed is the plunder case filed against him and explaining to the Ombudsman his admission that he and his wife were once owners of Wintrack, one of the contractors for Terminal 3. Media reports said Wintrack was awarded by Piatco a construction job at the Naia 3 while Alvarez was then a member of Congress spearheading the investigation into the legality of the Piatco contract. Records also show that he was Naia assistant general manager in 1994 during which he evaluated and passed upon the bids for the project. Now that he is transportation secretary, he must convince the Commission on Appointments that his intimate involvement with Piatco has not prejudiced the interest of the government and the public.

DOTC claim: Tan opposes Terminal 3 to keep PAL's exclusive use of Terminal 2.

Response: As explained many times before, PAL does not have an exclusive right to Terminal 2. Other carriers are free to apply to move there if they so wish. The MIAA has in fact invited other airlines to transfer to Terminal 2. However, no less than the Naia general manager himself has admitted that there are no takers of his offer.

"We invited other airlines but they do not want to transfer for technical and practical reasons," Edgar Manda told the House committee on good government last Nov. 27.

The reality today is that had PAL not moved its operations to Terminal 2 in 1999, the facility would have become a useless "white elephant" wasting taxpayers' money. The riding public is quite happy with PAL's unified operation at Terminal 2 and the airline sees no valid reason to split its operations again, as its detractors insist.

DOTC claim: Tan is behind the smear campaign against Secretary Alvarez.

Response: Secretary Alvarez is barking up the wrong tree. As repeated many times before, Tan and PAL are not parties to the P76-million plunder suit Alvarez is now facing at the Ombudsman. Nor are they among the parties formally opposing Alvarez's confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. The real issue here, as some observers have pointed out, is Alvarez's questionable handling of the Terminal 3 contract vis-à-vis Piatco over the last several years.

* * *

As you may have noticed in the exchange between the DOTC and PAL, both parties do not confront frontally facts that are against it but evade them and argue from another angle. For example, on PAL's claim that other airlines do not want to move to Terminal 2 for technical and practical reasons, the DOTC evades this and only says "How can they move there when PAL has fully occupied all choice slots?" Another example: on the DOTC claim that "the collusion among Tan, Ricky Delgado of Miascor and Yasay of Maso is very evident" and that "it is common knowledge in the industry that the bulk of Maso's membership is directly under the control of Tan," PAL has no comment. It merely said that PAL and Tan are not parties to the plunder case against Alvarez and to the opposition to his confirmation by the Commission on Appointments. Half-truths and half-lies. Don't take everything they say hook, line and sinker. One has to look at all angles to have an accurate picture of a controversy.

The giant awakens

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

IT'S a push and a pull, a friend of mine says.

The push is bad business here and horrible peace-and-order conditions. The second in particular has become a main concern of businessmen like himself. Being kidnapped has ceased to be a possibility and become a probability. No small thanks to the Philippine National Police, which is at best no part of the solution and at worst a huge part of the problem. So he's calling it quits, as well indeed as a great many of his businessmen friends, particularly those of Chinese descent. They too are packing up and resettling elsewhere. The elsewhere tends to be China, the land of birth of many of those businessmen, or that of their ancestors.

The pull is China itself. China today, he says, is the promised land, the last frontier of prosperity or high-growth rates. Everyone is knocking on China's gate, and being allowed to enter there today is not unlike being allowed to enter the Forbidden City during the time of the emperors. It is to feel exceptionally privileged. It's not just the market, my friend says, though that is a mouth-watering thing enough in itself. It is hard to imagine any business not flourishing with more than a billion people looking for things to buy. It is also the rigid system there. "Let's face it," my friend says, "businessmen like order, or predictability. They do not like nasty surprises, like strikes or kidnappings or officials changing the rules midstream."

Well, China was the cover of several international magazines this year, the theme of which was that the sleeping giant had awakened. Economic activity has been frenetic in that country of late, which has all of Asia, quite apart from the rest of the world, gaping in awe—and fear. China is no longer just producing low-end electronic and computer products—though that is still how we tend to see it, courtesy of the cheap VCD players that teem in Virra Mall and Port Area in Manila—it is producing high-end ones. Enough to make India predict sorrowfully that Shanghai will replace Bangalore as the IT capital of Asia in 10 years' time—probably less.

"Look at it this way," a Chinese friend of mine, who manages a steel mill in this country, and who visited China recently says, "that country has got everything, an enormous internal market, an enormous land area and an enormous pool of talent. Those were the things that made America a century ago."

The enormous land area he could personally vouch for, he says. He toured a steel mill north of Beijing, he said, and he wasn't exaggerating when he uses the word "tour." To get from one office to the next, they had to take a ride in a vehicle similar to the ones they use in airports to transport cargo. It made him feel, he said, like he was managing a matchbox factory here. They were introduced to the officials, some of whom wore only shorts and T-shirts while talking on cellular phones. One graduated from the MIT, and several studied in other American universities. They were in charge of the place.

The last point was the thing that impressed me most. The articles in Asiaweek and other international magazines also pointed that out. China's climb to warp speed, or its more earthly equivalents, was being made possible by the return of Chinese students who studied in American and European schools. That was where China was getting its talent pool for its high-end ventures. That and the pool of talent, quite apart from skilled workers, it got overnight when it reclaimed Hong Kong.

I was not a little astounded by the phenomenon, having read books about the "excesses" of the Cultural Revolution and seen movies—by directors who continue to be censored and prevented from leaving the country by the current government—depicting the experience in very poignant terms. And of course by the loud echoes of Tienanmen in the brain. One would imagine the last thing Chinese youth who had studied abroad would want to do would be to go back to that kind of world.

Especially so in light of the pleasures of the West the students were bound to be exposed to, not all of them of the sybaritic kind. Civil liberties were high on that list, above all the freedom to criticize and move about. All the hoary Cold War stereotypes about a communist government worrying about their visiting nationals being "corrupted" by the West played tricks in the mind. And these were not just nationals, these were youth, the most impressionable of minds. One would have thought China had taken a huge gamble in sending them to study in Western schools—and made the wrong bet.

Not so, it turns out. I do not know the explanation to the phenomenon. Whether it's family, or the opportunities for personal advancement their country promises, or the new economic opportunities there, or an idealistic stake in country and a desire to change it by means other than rallies. Maybe all of the above. But it was the one thing, I thought, that clinched the argument. This country was going places. The giant had awakened and would be the most dominant force in this part of the world in the next 10 years—probably less.

Which also made me wonder again about the pool of talent we've lost over the decades from our best and brightest studying abroad. They never became the best and brightest for us, they just became—well, rich expatriates: They never became the best and brightest in their adopted countries either. Of course the argument, a completely valid one, is that their home country offered, and offers, only limited opportunity and unlimited trouble. But you look at it through the eyes of a Chinese student in Harvard or Stanford, and you ask yourself if China does not offer even worse, particularly in the area of freedom. So why do they go home and we don't? So why do they go home and we leave?

I do know the Chinese ideogram for crisis is the same one for opportunity.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

At home in paradise

COMMENTARY

Sylvia L. Mayuga

AS far south of Manila as one could go without fear of kidnap, it came closer to the mislaid roots of Filipino reality than one had been in a long time. Of course 421 kilometers had to be traversed by air and 63 more on a northward highway under construction from earth being mercilessly gouged from its surrounding hillsides under the edict of tourism. The last stretch on country road shook the head and rattled the brain but there were yet eight more kilometers of slippery slope, rice paddy and eight creeks to cover on foot by dawn the next day.

There was no electricity in the forest ranger station where we bunked and strange hissing sounds in the foliage around the outhouse. With overstretched muscles and bruises from the rough trail, there was need to be on constant alert for malarial mosquitoes. Paying the price, handsome reward was ours in a paradise whirring with life in the gurgling music of the Babuyan River.

The country we had come home to in northern Palawan was well-named "ancestral domain." Its morning greeting was a deceptively named "white-throated kingfisher," a flash of orange head and ultramarine wing darting for breakfast in thick riverbank foliage. Next five banana trunks, stripped to a sheen and lashed together with vines, came gently floating downriver, loaded with almaciga resin and a young Batak boy contemplating the world chin in hand.

We had come to discover whether video cameras in 2001 could still capture glimpses of Palawan's tribal tradition such as sensitive ethnographers like Venturello in the 16th century, Alfred Marche in the 19th, Alfredo Roces and Nicole Revel in the 20th have recorded in their books, etchings, photos and, of late, laser disks. The answer was both "yes" and "no."

"Yes," as we walked into a panorama of lowland swiddens with herons royally perched on carabaos, insouciantly standing on one leg and poking for frogs in the paddies, or nestled like a covey of white partridges on a (pear) tree. "Yes" when dusky Batak women catch and hold you with lovely soulful eyes on a rain forest path fragrant with coffee blossoms and wild herbs.

"Yes" when mud washes off your Mojos in limpid creeks free of detergent wrappers and cigarette butts. And a resounding "yes" when the trek ends in the roar of river rapids just waiting to wash sweaty bodies and dust-caked hair among smooth colored stones. Who needs a showerhead when to bathe is to swim in the run-off of mountain lakes and streams, face-up to lazy nimbus clouds in the clear blue, afloat on lungs filled with pure oxygen?

"Yes" when the nut-brown *masikampu* Balonis, hereditary chief of the 23 Tagbanua families sharing this ancestral domain with 13 Batak families, turns out to be a laughing philosopher skilled in the ways of our common Austronesian ancestors. Having caught him sharpening a time-honored spear for the *baboy damo* he still hunts for food, we next come upon him by the river, deftly gouging out the innards of a tree with a crescent-shaped chisel evolved through centuries of boat-building. With this marvel of an artifact, a canoe for his family to ford the river for food and pleasure would be ready in two days. But another "yes" waited downriver—his wife and two children throwing lines into river stillness for dinner, the first catch wriggling in a distinctive miniature Tagbanua basket.

Where, in this series of "yeses" was the "no"? Right there, in the disguise of a Burger King T-shirt in which a third generation tribal chief chose to meet us, only to discover how badly our cameras longed to capture him bare-breasted, wearing only the ancestral *bahag* he has already foresworn. Under pressure from missionizing Christianity, Balonis now also confines his faith in the *diwatas* of forest and river to his own home. Few tribal neighbors come to consult him anymore, let alone learn the ancient pharmacopeia of a forest shaman.

Overarching this piece of self-sustaining paradise like a McDonald's arch is the looming shadow of the largest "no" of all, thanks to a cash economy closing in on the 5,190 hectares to which its resident tribes were given a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) by the government in 1996. Commercial logging by outsiders has ceased but since the Big City's antique-collecting fever broke out in the '60s, nearly all tribal heirlooms have gradually been weasled out of their heirs by antique collectors on the cheap decades ago.

Most threatened is Mother Nature's own legacy to the first children of Palawan. The forest is still recovering from the logging orgy of the '60s to the '80s but the ancestral rule of killing only what one needs to eat is now being flouted by hunters who have begun to sell their catch in the outside market. Not surprisingly, a daily *baboy damo* catch five decades ago has dwindled to once a month. Even more worrying are the long fingers of globalization reaching into ancestral domain for more and more precious "products" to feed industrialization's hungry maw. Topping the list is the *almaciga* resin—raw material for industrial paint, glue and varnish—now leaving the forest for cash value with greater system than in the days of the British East India Company.

Sold to middlemen, who come for it at the entrance to paradise, is the work of 20 days per 10-kilo sack, at P7 to P8 devalued pesos a kilo. With only two forest rangers in the area, the CADC rule to tap only one side of the tree trunk is easily broken by cash-hungry tribal hands cutting all around it for more sap, killing the tree in exchange for as many cash tickets to "civilization" as they can get.

And so paradise lives—if under creeping siege from within and without. Who of its rightful heirs care enough to help it strike a balance to help keep it a while longer? Ancestral it is, and not only for its natives. Prisoners of the Big City ache to come home, too, and remember who and what they really are.

Sylvia L. Mayuga is a veteran freelance writer on historical and cultural issues.

China reshuffles local leaders

NEWS ANALYSIS

Robert J. Saiget

BEIJING—A reshuffle of China's top provincial leaders, including the resignation of Shanghai's popular mayor last week, shows early political jostling has begun ahead of an imminent generational change in the communist leadership, analysts say.

The shake-up comes ahead of next fall's five-yearly Communist Party Congress, a crucial meeting likely to usher in the so-called "fourth generation" of leaders.

It has bolstered efforts by President Jiang Zemin, expected to step down as Communist Party general secretary at the congress, to strengthen his political base and ensure a smooth and peaceful transition of power, leading China watchers say.

Most dramatic among the changes was the surprise resignation last Friday of Shanghai Mayor Xu Kuangdi, two days after the appointment of a new party boss in the booming southern metropolis of Shenzhen.

The same week, new appointments were also made to top posts in the provinces of Shandong, Hubei and Inner Mongolia.

These followed postings earlier this year in Yunnan, Fujian, Henan, Jiangxi and Guangxi provinces and a spate of lower-level reshufflings, firings and even arrests of allegedly corrupt local leaders.

"The provincial personnel changes so far offer no clues that can be used to predict Jiang's future—what is sure is that Jiang's political base will increase through the reshuffle," said Wu Guoguang, a China scholar at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

"This is all related to next year's party congress. What we are now seeing is the finalization of the provincial-level appointments," Wu added.

Observers are still studying the fallout from the reshuffle, especially the uncertain political future of ex-mayor Xu, shifted to a far more junior post but one in Beijing, potentially nearer the levers of central power.

Xu's boss, Shanghai party secretary and Jiang supporter Huang Ju, is widely expected to move to a central leadership position, as are other well known Jiang protégés, Guangdong party boss Li Changchun and Beijing party head Jia Qingling.

They could be appointed to central party and government jobs or top spots in the national parliament, Wu said.

During the Jiang era, Shanghai has been the proving ground for up and coming leaders. Both Jiang and Premier Zhu Rongji were Shanghai mayors, and now lead the so-called "Shanghai Gang" in central government.

"Shanghai is a very important place so it is important to get ready for the next generation of leadership there...but the more difficult decisions are still to come with the central leadership appointments," Wu said.

All the maneuvering is necessary because there are no clear rules for succession in China's one-party communist system.

Jiang is scheduled to step down as party boss next year and then as president in 2003, but no one knows for certain exactly how much power he will relinquish.

He has not said whether he will retire from one, two or all his positions—he also heads China's military—or continue to rule behind the scenes as did predecessors Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

Observers say much of this could depend on whether Jiang can protect his legacy by installing enough followers in power, a task he wants to complete soon.

"Political appointments and political debates are normally going on long before the party congress, this is critical," said Ding Xueliang, political scientist Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

"Party leaders do not want to see debate and controversy spill over at the congress, that would send the wrong signals to the nation, so it is important that all the personnel controversies be resolved beforehand."

Up for grabs at the 16th Party Congress will be around 12 positions on the elite 22-member Central Committee Politburo, as well as up to five spots on the all powerful seven-member Politburo Standing Committee.

Members of these will then be in line for the top state jobs such as president, premier, vice premier, state councilor and minister.

It by no means certain Jiang will get his protégés into the top jobs, observers say.

As a "third generation" Communist Party leader, Jiang lacks the political clout of his revolution-hardened predecessors and has had to instead rely on negotiation, consensus-building and compromise.

"Jiang Zemin can only win about 60 percent of his political battles, while in comparison Deng Xiaoping won about 90 percent of his and Mao Zedong won 100 percent," Ding said.

Amid this there are others fighting their own battles, notably Vice President Hu Jintao, widely expected to replace Jiang as president and party general secretary, and arch-conservative Li Peng, chair of the parliament.

Handpicked by Xiaoping in the mid 1990s as the "core of the fourth generation leadership," Hu will need all the support he can muster to fulfill this destiny. **AFP**

Roots of Christmas traditions

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

A SURE sign of changing times and the adaptation of tradition is the rescheduling of the *simbang gabi*. These nine (hence the word *novena*) dawn Masses preceding Christmas used to begin as early as 4 in the morning in many parishes around the country. The liturgical point was not to get people to sacrifice a few hours of precious sleep in these cold and dark mornings but to heighten our expectation for Christmas. However we tend to forget the reason for advent as a preparation for Christmas and in return for the trouble of completing the cycle many Filipinos haggle with God for a wish or favor. The "I'll-do-this-if you-give-me-this" attitude may explain why some churches start out full in the first few days and taper off later.

Urban Filipinos who have to work from 9 to 5 or students who have to be in school from 7 to 4 have a particularly rough time with the *simbang gabi*. Fortunately, there has been a growing number of churches that now offer the novena Masses late at night instead of dawn. Technically, anything after 6 is considered for the next day, like "anticipated Sunday Mass" held on Saturday evenings at 6. Why wake up early the next morning if one can fulfill the obligation the night before? With traffic the way it is in some parts of Manila one can just stroll in a mall, hear Mass and go home late. We tend to forget that liturgical time was set in days before the light bulb when people had to adapt to the availability of sunlight. With electricity that can light up the deepest, darkest of nights, anticipated dawn Masses are no problem.

As Dec. 16 approaches I have been trying to decide whether to take the dawn or evening Mass to complete the nine-day cycle. Recently, while caught in traffic, I went through all the Christmas traditions we do as Filipinos and started to dissect its Spanish and Roman Catholic roots. I notice these days that more and more people use the familiar Filipino term *simbang gabi* (or sometimes *simbanggabi*) creating some confusion with the use of the Spanish term Misa de Gallo. Gallo means rooster which partly explains why the long wooden bench with wooden slats under the seat are called *gallineras*. These benches that were formerly part of every well-appointed Filipino home are now scarce and are mostly found in antique shops today. The bottom of these benches was not just a storage cabinet but a cage for roosters and chickens.

Getting back to the Misa de Gallo, some people think the plural form is Misa de Gallos (literally, mass of roosters!) rather than Misas de Gallo (dawn Masses). The problem is not just a misplaced suffix but interchanging Misa de Gallo with Misa de Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo is not the name of an extinct department store. It is not even the first president of the republic as in Emilio Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo literally means a gift, generally cash, that is given out during Christmas. Thus, the Misa de Aguinaldo is the Christmas Mass. To complicate things further. Aguinaldo is not the term for Christmas. The correct term is Navidad, which has nothing to do with the navy, it is the shorter form for Natividad (nativity) that Filipinos know as a common surname or a name carried by ancient spinster aunts. Natividad is the feast of the nativity of Jesus Christ on Dec. 25 and Navidad pertained to the whole Christmas season that runs from Christmas Day to New Year (Jan. 1) or even Tres Reyes (Three Kings formerly Jan. 6, now the first Sunday after New Year). Merry Christmas in Spanish is now Feliz Navidad. Formerly, Felices Pascuas was also used for Christmas but is now used more for Easter.

Nochebuena, literally good night, is often taken to mean the Christmas feast laid out after the Midnight Mass on Dec. 24. Traditionally, we have *queso de bola* (Marca Pato of course), Majestic ham, *castañas* and all the sweets that make everyone smile—including the diabetics. Nochebuena is the contracted form of *el dia de Noche Buena* or that which precedes Christmas Day. It is Christmas Eve, not the meal before gifts are exchanged. In Spain and other countries they have a *nochebueno* (rather *nochebuena*) which is a cake of oil, eggs, honey, almonds, *piñones* and other goodies consumed at Christmas. It could also mean a large trunk of a tree placed in the fire on Christmas Eve. The same term can have different meanings for different people.

Another example would be Belen which can be taken to be a woman's name in the Philippines or the Christmas tableau set up in homes and churches depicting the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph (hence the term *susmariosep* from Hesus, Maria, y Jose). The figures are placed in a stable surrounded by shepherds, the Three Kings, sheep, donkeys and oxen and this was started way back in 1223. Even St. Francis of Assisi celebrated Christmas in a barn to help people remember the simplicity and humility of the first Christmas. Belen is not a name or a tableau, but the short Spanish form for Bethlehem, where Jesus Christ was born. As a people separated from their past because of language, we go through life not realizing how much history and meaning are contained in everyday words. Advent makes us stop to think and prepare for Christmas in more ways than gift-giving.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Fiesta!

HIGH BLOOD

Naty Lapuz-Templo

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

THE OTHER night I had a strange dream—my family was hosting a fiesta lunch. On the table was spread a fancy lace tablecloth, complimented by our finest china and silverware, but, curiously, we were serving only *arroz caldo*.

When I awoke I tried to analyze my dream...uh...nightmare. I realized that our town fiesta (in Arayat, Pampanga) on Nov. 25 had been on my mind lately because some town mates had told me they were planning to go home and asked me if I could join them. No, thank you, I replied. At my age, party food (which there will surely be plenty of) no longer holds such great fascination to me. I hope St. Catherine of Alexandria, our patron saint, will not miss me.

Our ancestral house in Arayat is now being rented out, as no one in the family maintains it anymore. But I know I will not run out of hospitable hosts among the hordes of relatives and friends still living there.

I recall a few fiestas back when I tagged along with my *balikbayan* sister and her husband, to fulfill their wish to once again visit our old hometown. We were warmly welcomed by relatives, served with a filling lunch and updated on the latest family news and gossip. On my brother-in-law's insistence we called on other relatives (they would feel slighted, he said, if they knew we were in town but did not even give them the courtesy of a visit). Invariably we found their dining tables overflowing with platters of delicious (and cholesterol-rich) food. Out of politeness we obliged their bidding to "taste" their dishes until our ballooning bellies were ready to explode (not to mention being overpowered with guilt for casting aside doctor-imposed diets).

I also hold memories of earlier fiestas when my parents were still around and I was decades younger. My mother commissioned a middle-aged woman to do the cooking for two days—the *bisperas* and the fiesta day itself. The woman would come to the house, her youngest child in tow, a brown cigarette stuck in her mouth with the lighted end between her teeth. Once she stepped into our kitchen, however, she hastily discarded the soggy stick, else my mother would chastise her for such an offensive habit.

Meanwhile, a couple of men, their shirts and pants bloodied from their recent chore, would carry upstairs sections of a freshly butchered pig and proceed to cut it up according to the cook's specifications. There would be some discussion as to which parts to make into *bachoy, dinuguan, menudo, cocido, estofado, adobo* and other Spanish-sounding dishes, but we kids lingered around begging only for the ribs to grill over burning coals in the clay stove.

Early the next morning, another preoccupation of ours was to watch the roasting of a smaller pig in a pit at the farther end of our backyard. The procedure was so slow that we had time to get dressed, dash to church and hear the hour-and-a-half long Mass, and by the time we got back the *lechon* was still being turned.

Cousins from the city would come bearing baskets of special *ensaymada* and assorted homemade pastries. An endless stream of guests—relatives from the barrios, out-of-town friends, friends' neighbors, the cook's own neighbors and relatives and others we did not know—descended on us and kept the kitchen help perpetually busy.

I wonder now how my faint-hearted mother coped through those hours or days without having to worry if the food would last. I guess she took comfort in the thought that other households had similar, if not worse, experiences. At least our cook and the hastily hired kitchen staff did not pilfer anything from the kitchen, and the merrymaking did not deteriorate into rowdy drinking sprees.

In later years when I had moved away, I heard that critics were advocating the "abolition" of the fiesta, writing it off as a useless extravagance. But some respected elders held contrary opinions. Fiestas, they said, were occasions for family reunions and were opportunities to entertain business associates and bosses. Why not hold low-key festivities instead, as a form of thanksgiving for bountiful harvest, good health and success in business?

Eventually the elders' view prevailed, making the town's religious devotees particularly happy. For it is said that whenever people showed reluctance to celebrate St. Catherine's feast, her wheel (the saint's statue, with a wheel beside it, adorns the top front of the Catholic church) could be heard grinding and the light bulb on it could be seen flashing—signs of her displeasure, perhaps?

Personally, I favor having fiestas—if kept in moderation. To be sure, I would not spend my last peso, much less go into debt, to hold them. Neither would I go to the austere extreme by serving nothing more than *arroz caldo*.

As the Roman philosopher Plautus said, "In everything the middle course is best: all things in excess bring trouble." Who needs more trouble these days? We have enough of the Abu Sayyaf and Osama bin Laden already.

Naty Lapuz-Templo, 67, retired from government service and occasionally writes for women's magazines.

THEY SAID

No to divorce

"Before we can legalize separation, let's do something to help marriages."

—Alliance for the Family Foundation Philippines Inc.'s Manny Arejola, opposing the passage of the divorce law

Wrong champion

"We looked at him as the epitome of hope for the Bangsamoro, a redeemer and champion of our cause. But we were wrong."

—Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin said of former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari

Senators of the Republic

"We are not senators of parties, of regions and certainly not of our own persons but senators of the Republic, obliged by our privileged positions to put national interest above all else."

—Senate President Franklin Drilon, asking other senators to set aside politics and focus on work

Shirking responsibility

"We don't want the name of our forefather attached with a responsibility which we are unbelievably walking away from."

—Rosemary Hubbard, heir of Maj. Harold Clark for whom the US air base in Pampanga was named after, on the toxic waste issue

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House should now expel Jalosjos

SALINLAHI, an alliance for children's concerns, is very grateful to the Supreme Court in its decision affirming the conviction of Romeo Jalosjos for raping an 11-year-old girl. Finally, after a long wait and vigil among us child rights advocates who became part of the many concerned and nameless people and organizations that stood beside the victim in her pursuit for justice, justice has been served and victory was finally achieved.

The Supreme Court's decision is a major accomplishment of the country's judicial system for it provides a positive sign to other victims of injustice that our judicial system is on their side and that indeed no one is above the law. It also rekindled the burning passion of the people working for the rights and welfare of the marginalized sector, especially the children, and encouraged them not to be cowed by affluent culprits and criminals.

Now that the Supreme Court has ruled, the House of Representatives has every reason from moral to legal grounds, to expel him from its roster. The Supreme Court has done what is right, now is the appropriate time for the House to follow suit.—**NOTO GOBRIN, campaign desk, Salinlahi Foundation Inc., Alliance for Children's Concerns, 80-A Mapang-akit St., Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City**

For what Nida Blanca was to many

NIDA Blanca was the favorite of my parents. In Samar where I grew up, I remember that Nanay and my late Tatay relished the antics of Blanca and Dolphy in "John en Marsha." Her earlier movie "Waray-Waray" was a family favorite. Being Warays, we see Blanca as the epitome of our mothers, sisters, neighbors or friends. Waray women are loving, caring, very soft-hearted, persevering. However, never underestimate their strength for they are also *matapang* (just like Blanca) when you trample on their rights or disrespect them.

Just like the rest of millions of Filipinos, we were saddened and angry with Blanca's brutal murder. Gone is the woman who would defend her principles and would fight for what is right. Gone is the woman the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board describes as the most productive and efficient in her job as a member of that body.

We hope our investigating authorities will work harder, focus on substantial matters (not fall guys) to apprehend the real killers because Nida Blanca deserves to get justice. To us, she was a Waray, she was a Filipina.—**PERCIVAL A. ADALLA, 4859 Buñao Road, Dumaguete City**

Why were VACC, Gabriela absent?

WHENEVER there's a child rape case, the members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption and Gabriela are visible during court hearings, particularly on promulgation day, to give support to the child victim and urge the judge to render the death sentence.

In one case, however, I am wondering why these two crusaders-for-justice groups were not visible in the court hearings of a child rape case in a Quezon City regional trial court where the alleged rapist is a Catholic priest!—**T.A. CRUZ, Tondo I, Manila**

LETTERS

Living with what we lost on Doña Paz

ONCE again my family, relatives, friends and the rest of the country are commemorating the 14th death anniversary of those thousands of passengers who perished in the world's worst sea tragedy, the sinking of MV Doña Paz on Dec. 20, 1987.

The sinking was due to the collision of MV Doña Paz with MT Vector, an oil tanker somewhere in Tablas Strait off Marinduque. The death of my parents and sister was a dreadful and harrowing experience for my family.

After more than a decade of grieving, my family has learned to accept the loss of our parents and sister. Acceptance in the sense that at least we are now prepared to live with their untimely deaths with peace in our hearts and a fervent hope that in our next life we can all be together with Jesus.—**MAITA T. ESPINA, 12 Susana Ave., South Susana Homes, Molino, Bacoor, Cavite**

Awkward historical situation

THIS is to thank Ambeth Ocampo for the information in his column (PDI, 10/17/01) and also to react to it. Briefly, he said that when Highway 54 was named after Epifanio de los Santos, it was the living historians of that time who made the choice.

Ironically, it was also another historian, Renato Constantino, who mentioned in his book, "The Philippines—A Past Revisited," that the name of the fiscal who prosecuted Felipe Salvador of Bulacan was De los Santos. Salvador was a rebel against both Spanish and American rule, who joined the Katipunan and also served under Emilio Aguinaldo until his capture after which he led his own guerrilla activities. He was also a folk hero to the landless masses of five Central Luzon provinces. On the other hand, Don Panyong's achievements was in the field of letters, culture, arts and in the various positions he held in the colonial bureaucracy.

I do not disapprove of Don Panyong's hero status, based on excellence in his field of expertise, but I condemn his participation in the hanging of Felipe Salvador, who along with Macario Sakay of Tondo and Dionesio Magbuelas of Negros, were acknowledged to be also heroes by Serafin Quiason of the National Centennial Commission and the National Historical Institute in a letter to the opinion page (PDI 5/21/98) of this paper. I believe that the memory of a person who resisted foreign domination (which involved two successive imperialist powers), even if that resistance turned out to be futile, should be held in higher esteem by any country with pretensions to being an independent nation, than the memory of a person who became a part of the conqueror's legal machinery, who was mandated to eliminate Filipino nationalists (whom they considered as outlaws).

The recognition of Salvador and company as heroes by the NCC has led the elite into another awkward situation. The judiciary, although it has been silent about this matter, keeps the records that say they were convicted felons and it is doubtful whether or not these records were nullified by the NCC's opinion. Either way, we are now in a comical situation where Salvador and De los Santos or the executed and executioner are both heroes. Obviously, Don Panyong, whose name is now equated with People Power, cannot be toppled from his pedestal and neither can the NCC withdraw its recognition of Salvador.

The anti-nationalist spirit of the colonial government has endured from generation to generation, from the hanging of Salvador et al. to the memorializing of his prosecutor with a main thoroughfare and to a recent editorial (not the INQUIRER's) for the last National Heroes Day. Those who actuated these three events had one thing in common—they attached no importance to the armed resistance against the United States. The editorial praised only those who struggled against Spain, Japan and Marcos. For the entire American period it cited only the Filipinos who "embraced peace," those who "strived for national development" and those who engaged in "the pursuit of independence." Peace? It was either peace on the enemy's terms or the peace of the graveyard. National development? The US Congress imposed the Payne Aldrich Act of 1909, which was in reality the progenitor of globalization, a system that widens the gap between the rich and the poor. Pursuit of independence? To be free and independent is an inherent right of all peoples. Therefore, it is presumptuous for one country to grant independence to another.

There is nothing in the national anthem that alludes to independence developers, but it has something for those who perished for freedom in such places as Tirad Pass, Batangas, the howling wilderness of Samar, etc. with all deaths induced by the forcible imposition of American rule.—**VIRGILIO V. BAYBAY, Ilawod, Guinobatan, Albay 4503**

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Terrorists attack India parliament

NEW DELHI—A group of armed men opened fire in India's parliament on Thursday, killing several people in an unprecedented attack on the seat of government in a nation frequently racked by violence.

Several ministers were in the building, next to the prime minister's office, but were not hurt. There was no immediate indication of the reason for the attack.

Local television said the raid was carried out by five terrorists, four of whom were killed in a shootout with security guards. Doctors at a nearby hospital said at least six guards were killed and 14 seriously injured.

The fate of the fifth attacker was not known.

Witnesses heard gunfire from the building for at least an hour after the attack began about 11:45 a.m. (2:15 p.m. in Manila), soon after both houses of parliament were adjourned for the day.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's office at first said he was in the complex, but officials later said he had not yet arrived when the shooting started and had since been taken to a safe location under heavy guard.

Hundreds of troops in full battle gear took up position around the parliament, sealing off the area as security forces throughout Delhi were put on red alert.

Authorities fear there are several more casualties in the building and dozens of stretchers were being readied at a nearby hospital, witnesses said.

All streets leading to the parliamentary complex, home to both houses of parliament and almost 800 MPs, were closed.

India is racked by separatist and communal violence, but it is the first time such an attack has been launched on the heavily guarded parliamentary complex.

On Oct. 1, 38 people were killed in a suicide-bomb attack on the state assembly in the troubled state of Jammu and Kashmir in India's far north.

A Pakistan-based militant group first claimed responsibility for that attack, but later denied having carried it out. *Reuters*

Bush declares ABM pullout

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush told top US lawmakers Wednesday that he will soon notify Russia that he plans to pull out of the 1972 ABM treaty in order to forge ahead with the missile shield Moscow opposes.

Bush has always derided the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty as a Cold War relic and asserted neither it nor resistance from Russia, China, key US allies, or US Democrats would stop him from fielding a missile defense system.

"He thinks that the best way to preserve peace and to promote it is to move beyond the ABM Treaty," White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said, adding that Bush diplomacy had led to ``a real diminution" in opposition to the plan.

Fleischer declined to confirm the timeframe for Bush's announcement on the six-months notice he is required to give Moscow under the terms of the treaty. Officials who declined to be named said it could come as early as Thursday.

"We have come to the point where we knew we would arrive," a senior US official who requested anonymity said Wednesday. ``We're about to give them (the Russians) notice."

Democratic Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle said Bush had informed him of the decision during a White House breakfast and told reporters he worried about the impact on Washington's relations with its allies.

"It undermines the fragile coalition that we have with our allies . . . I think that it's going to complicate as well our relations with Russia, with China, and I think we've got to be very concerned about that," he said.

The news comes after months of Russo-US negotiations on strategic issues and after four meetings between Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin failed to yield an agreement enabling Washington to deploy the defensive arrangement.

"The president made a very strong attempt to try to reach an understanding with the Russians," said the official. "It wasn't possible." *AFP*

TRIVIA: Do you know that the expression "Throwing down the gauntlet" has historical roots? The phrase, which today means "an act of issuing a challenge," actually traces its origins to medieval Europe's Knighthood. Back then, personal feuds, especially among knights were settled in bloody duels. But first, one party must issue a formal challenge by throwing his gauntlet (glove) to the ground.

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WORLDBRIEFS

26 dead in Sri Lanka rebs attacks

COLOMBO—Tamil Tiger rebels Wednesday greeted the inauguration of Sri Lanka's new government with coordinated attacks that killed at least 26 people and wounded 44, officials said. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) separatists fired heavy mortar bombs at the Pahala Toppur army base in the northeastern district of Trincomalee and captured a bunker line, officials said. Defense ministry spokesperson Sanath Karunaratne said security forces managed to beat back the pre-dawn assault, killing at least six guerrillas and recapturing the bunker. Three soldiers were killed and 20 wounded in the heavy exchange of fire, Karunaratne said. *AFP*

Chief justice: Tommy should be jailed

JAKARTA—Tommy Suharto, the son of Indonesia's former dictator, should be jailed for 11 months—the time he spent on the run before a court annulled a conviction against him for graft, the country's chief justice said. Bagir Manan, the head of Indonesia's Supreme Court, made the comments in a letter to state prosecutors. The younger Suharto fled from justice in November last year, after he was sentenced to 18 months in jail for his role in a land scam that cost the state the equivalent of $11 million. Eight months later, the supreme court judge who convicted Tommy, Safiuddin Kartasasmita, was murdered by two gunmen who were later arrested and claimed Tommy had paid them to do the job. *AP*

Death for Aum cult co-founder upheld

TOKYO—The Tokyo High Court Thursday upheld the death sentence against a founding member of the Aum Supreme Truth cult for the murder of four people, including an anti-sect lawyer, his wife and baby son. "This was a cruel, brutal crime that crushed under foot the idea of a society based on laws," Judge Yoshimasa Kawabe said, rejecting an appeal by lawyers for Kazuaki Okazaki, 41. The death sentence meted out to Okazaki was the first for a member of the Aum doomsday cult, which released Nazi-invented Sarin gas in Tokyo's subway in March 1995, killing 12 people and injuring thousands. *AFP*

NZ readies sale of air force jets

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—As air force combat jets made their final fly past of the nation's capital and their squadrons were wound up Thursday, the government defended its decision to disband its air strike capability. The 17 Skyhawk fighter-bombers and 17 jet trainers, withdrawn from active service at an airfield ceremony north of the capital, Wellington, have already attracted buying interest from the air forces of nine countries, a sales agent said. Defense Minister Mark Burton, defending the scrapping of the air combat squadrons which date back to 1976, said "air combat aircraft and the weaponry needed to equip them are very expensive." *AP*

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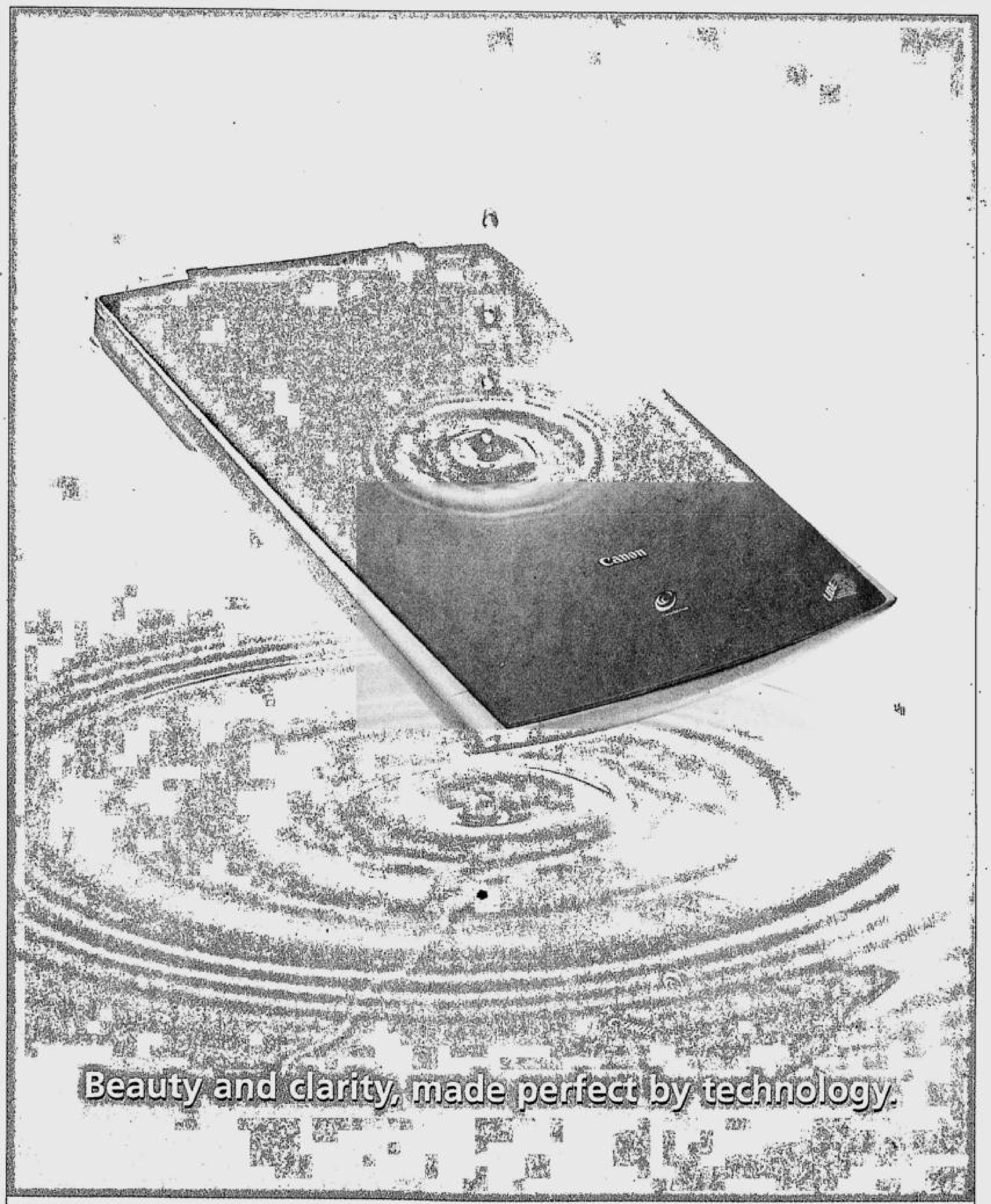

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SCANNERS

Israel hits back with jet raids, cuts ties with Arafat

A PALESTINIAN boy throws stones at an Israeli tank during clashes near the Neve Dekalim Jewish settlement at Khan Younis south of Gaza Strip Dec. 12 after the funeral of the four Palestinians killed by Israeli missiles. REUTERS

JERUSALEM—Israel sent its warplanes against Palestinian targets early on Thursday and severed ties with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in a move that seemed likely to scupper the latest US Middle East peace efforts.

The Middle East faced a fresh spiral of violence as Israeli planes struck in a wave of retaliatory raids for a double attack by Palestinian militants who killed 10 Israelis and wounded dozens in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Wednesday.

The raids were the start of a wider military operation announced by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's security Cabinet which decided in a meeting early on Thursday to give the Army orders "to carry out arrests and confiscate weapons."

The Cabinet also decided that Arafat "is no longer relevant as far as Israel is concerned and there will be no more contact with him." It said the decision did not mean Arafat would be personally harmed.

Officials said the decision meant there would be no more meetings with Palestinian officials and Israel would not rely on the Palestinian Authority to fight "terrorism."

"Arafat will no longer be the address for Israel to take care of the terror issue and from now on we will do whatever we can as a country to defend ourselves," Israeli Justice Minister Meir Sheetrit told a news conference after the meeting.

As the Cabinet met, Israeli F-16s pounded the largest security installation in the Gaza Strip and other targets in a wave of raids that lasted hours. They attacked an airport in southern Gaza and a security installation in Nablus.

A radio mast was hit by helicopter missiles in the West Bank city of Ramallah, near Arafat's headquarters. Officials said he was in the office at the time. Tanks also fired at positions held by Arafat's elite Force-17 guard on Ramallah's outskirts.

"It is impossible to implement our commitments under the shadow of the comprehensive war," Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo said. "The minute this campaign stops we will carry out our duties."

The dramatic surge in violence, including the ambush of a bus with grenades and machine guns near a Jewish settlement in the northern West Bank, seemed likely to wreck peace mission of US envoy Anthony Zinni aimed at ending nearly 15 months of bloodshed.

At least 764 Palestinians and 223 Israelis have been killed since a Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation erupted in September 2000 after a deadlock in peace negotiations.

The United States pointed a finger at Arafat, blaming his inaction for the ordeal of his people, and said only his "immediate, serious and sustained" action against militants could end Palestinians' suffering.*Reuters*

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US House OKs poll reform measure

WASHINGTON—On the first anniversary of a US Supreme Court ruling that decided the 2000 presidential election, the US House of Representatives on Wednesday approved a bill to implement the most sweeping reform of the nation's election system in more than a generation.

The legislation would provide funding for a number of improvements and for new equipment and establish election standards, including for what constitutes a vote on various kinds of voting machines.

The $2.65 billion measure, which passed 362-63, now goes to the Senate, where Democratic and Republican negotiators reached agreement on a similar bill late on Wednesday, congressional sources said.

Georgia Democratic Rep. John Lewis, a civil rights activist from the 1960s and one of more than 170 co-sponsors of the bipartisan House bill, said it would protect "the almost sacred right to vote."

Responding to critics who said the measure does not go far enough, Lewis said, "This bill is a necessary step in the right direction."

In fact, Lewis said, "It is the most important voting rights bill . . . since the Voting Rights Act of 1965," which was enacted to help blacks and members of other minority groups go to the polls.

Improvements

While federal elections have traditionally been handled and funded by states and localities, the House-passed bill would provide states with $2.25 billion over three years for new equipment and a number of other improvements.

States would also adopt minimum election standards, ranging from defining what constitutes a vote on different kinds of equipment to giving voters a chance to fix errors to maintaining statewide voter registration systems.

The measure would also provide $400 million to replace old punch-card voting machines, whose many problems were documented by the thousands of disputed ballots in the presidential race in Florida last year.

Former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, co-chairs of the National Commission on Federal Election Reform, hailed the House measure, which mirrored many of the recommendations they offered earlier this year.

At the White House, President George W. Bush commended the House vote, stating, "This legislation goes a long way toward adopting reforms advocated by the Ford/Carter Commission . . . and is based on principles I endorsed and recommended to Congress in July."

It remained unclear when the legislation would be taken up by the full Senate. Before a bill can be sent to Bush to sign into law, both chambers must approve it. *Reuters*

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AFP increases PMA quota as insurgency grows

BY VINCENT CABREZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—For the first time in five decades, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has increased its quota for Philippine Military Academy cadets as it anticipates heightened insurgency and a resumption of the crisis in Mindanao.

Capt. Edgard Arevalo, PMA spokesperson, said the Cadet Procurement Board, chaired by PMA superintendent Maj. Gen. Rufo de Veyra, approved on Monday the request for an additional plantilla for 300 to 350 cadets.

The move was made in the face of former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari's abandonment of a peace agreement between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front.

Arevalo said the decision was also made just as the Senate began debating on the fund support for the long-delayed AFP modernization program.

Sen. John Osmeña, chair of Senate finance committee, had realigned a P10-billion allocation assigned by the House of Representatives to the AFP.

"The military's decision to increase the number of PMA cadets and the concurrence from the (Department of Budget and Management) guaranteed that funds will supplement the cadet (population). We have always requested for more cadets, but this was the first time the military approved the request," Arevalo said.

The PMA had always stuck to the authorized cadet strength of 1,500 officers-in-training, from first year (plebes) to fourth year (first class cadets).

The approved increase in strength meant the absorption of some 300 applicants who are on a waiting list.

Based on the standard quota, PMA had processed only 836 applicants, from a list of 1,166 who passed the recent PMA entrance examinations, Arevalo said.

But he noted that Camp Aguinaldo took note of the high attrition rate affecting the PMA, as well as the paths taken by its alumni—all automatically commissioned officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

At Fort del Pilar, a trend survey revealed that the PMA had been losing less than half of the cadets enrolled for a given batch.

"We already lost a lot of applicants, who passed the written exams, but did not make the grade in their physical and neurological tests, or even their background investigations. But once in PMA, we also lose a substantial number," Arevalo said.

The academy now has no more than 600 cadets and about 140 first class cadets are due to graduate next year, he said.

Group files plunder complaint vs Chavit

BY MICHAEL LIM UBAC AND LEONCIO BALBIN JR.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

THE SAVE Ilocos Sur Alliance made good its promise on Thursday by filing a plunder case against former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and three Ilocos Sur officials before the Ombudsman.

The plunder case, the fourth in a series of cases filed by Sisa against Singson, was based on the alleged "rampant, continuous and irresponsible" release of public funds in Ilocos Sur.

David Roca, Sisa secretary general, said they timed the filing of the plunder case against Singson on the same day the former governor testified on the impeachment trial against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"This is to remind him that we are fighting for justice. But unlike him, we seek not for our own (welfare) but that of the people," Roca told the INQUIRER.

Charged with Singson were provincial administrator Ma. Victoria Cu, budget officer Erlita Arce and treasurer Antonio Gundran.

"Estrada is afraid of this number (13) because he finds it unlucky. Let's see if this is lucky for 258 (Singson's pet name)," Nestor Segismundo, Sisa president, said.

On Nov. 21, Sisa filed graft charges against Singson and five Ilocos Sur officials in connection with the alleged "ghost" purchase of a backhoe loader worth P9.5 million last year.

On Nov. 26, the same group filed charges against Singson for the purchase by the Ilocos Sur government of an allegedly overpriced parcel of land for P26 million in 1998.

On Dec. 6, Sisa filed technical malversation charges against Singson involving P30 million from tobacco excise taxes.

"Our crusade is a continuation of the crusade sparked by Mr. Singson to cleanse government of corruption. If he was brave enough to come and expose the shenanigans in the Estrada administration—the reason Estrada is now in prison and facing trial—he should also be man enough to face the consequences of his own indiscretions in the discharge of his duties as former governor of Ilocos Sur," Segismundo said.

The plunder charges stemmed from the incomplete documentation involving the release of more than P899 million used in various projects of the provincial government.

The disbursement of these public funds was classified by the Commission on Audit as either "suspended" or "disallowed."

According to COA rules, a local government official is given 90 days to complete the documentation for transactions classified as "suspended."

For a "disallowed" transaction, a local government official is required to return to the government coffers the amount involved within 90 days.

Another cause of the plunder case is the awarding of a P360.638-million contract to a company partly owned by one of the respondents.

In their eight-page complaint, the complainants alleged that based on records, the respondents have systematically misused public funds under their administration to the prejudice of the people of Ilocos Sur.

They said Singson and other respondents had entered into contracts and implemented the release of public funds despite the absence of complete documentation.

"This is one of our major steps to show that Mr. Singson committed huge anomalies during his reign and like his former friend, Estrada, justice should be served," lawyer Estelita Cordero, Sisa counsel, said.

Singson, however, dismissed the new allegations by Sisa.

"Like the first three cases, it would eventually be dismissed," Singson told the INQUIRER. "They are doing things for money and envy."

He ignored the timing of the filing of charges, saying the Sisa officials "are just following my steps."

Singson claimed the opposition Partido ng Masang Pilipino was behind the "demolition moves" against him.

Singson, who joined President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to Magalang, Pampanga, said the PMP has funneled a "huge amount of money" to "destroy him." ***With reports from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

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TELECOM

Rebels admit burning bus

Mission part of 'revolutionary tax' drive, says leader

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army in Central Visayas on Wednesday claimed responsibility for the burning of a Philtranco bus in Catmon town on Tuesday.

Silvino "Ka Bino" Clamucha, claiming to be the spokesperson of the CPP-NPA in the region, said it was the Vicente Padayao Brigade Front 2 based in Cebu that conducted the operation.

Clamucha told radio dyLA here that the "operation" against Philtranco was ordered by the CPP-NPA central committee after its "finance taxation department" reported that the bus company had "committed several violations" in the amount it was supposed to pay to the rebel group.

Clamucha declined to say what the violations were, but he confirmed that the CPP-NPA had demanded "revolutionary tax" from Philtranco.

He said he did not know the details of the taxation scheme because only those in the CPP-NPA national leadership were privy to the negotiations with the company.

He said the "order" was issued by the CPP-NPA central committee in October and approved by CPP-NPA chair Armando Liwanag. It took two months to prepare for the "operation," Clamucha said.

He said the burning of the Philtranco bus along the highway in Catmon, 47 kilometers north of this city, was part of the rebels' plan to force the company to pay the "revolutionary tax."

The bus, with 15 passengers on board, left the city early in the day on its way to Bogo via Tacloban City in Leyte when three of the passengers stopped the bus in Barangay Panalipan, Catmon.

About 20 heavily armed men were already waiting in the area and immediately surrounded the bus.

The bus was torched by one of the rebels, a woman who was among the passengers, after all the passengers were ordered to disembark.

Clamucha was what happened to the Philtranco bus should serve as a "lesson" to other companies that refuse to pay the "revolutionary tax" to the CPP-NPA.

HUMAN RIGHTS RALLY RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Participants of the Human Rights Day rally in Davao City light bamboo torches as they denounce the United States' attacks on Afghanistan following the Sept. 11 terrorist bombings.

Supporters of breakaway rebels picket forum

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—About 2,500 supporters of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade blocked the entrances of the venue of the peace forum on Wednesday to demand the immediate implementation of a government-signed peace accord with the breakaway communist faction.

The protest was staged as representatives of the Church and civil society drafted a proposed supplementary agreement to the peace agreement during the forum attended by Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Eduardo Ermita at the Sacred Heart Seminary here.

"We are demanding the immediate implementation of the peace agreement so that development projects and peace long promised can become a reality," said Vicente Alabos Jr., spokesperson of the People's Movement for Peace and Development.

He said they should have been allowed to attend the peace forum because they would be the ones who would directly benefit from the accord.

The Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas (RPMP), the political arm of the RPA-ABB, entered a peace agreement with then President Joseph Estrada on Dec. 10, 2000.

When President Macapagal-Arroyo took over the presidency, she immediately formed a panel to review the peace pact.

But civil society groups sought a re-negotiation, claiming that some of provisions of the agreement were disadvantageous to the public.

On Wednesday, the RPA-ABB supporters trooped to the venue of the forum to demand the immediate implementation of the peace pact.

"No to reformulation, yes to immediate implementation," the group chanted.

After the forum, Ermita talked to the protestors to assure them that the government would try to immediately implement the agreement.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo was concerned about their welfare and the need to address poverty.

Ermita's remarks were met by loud applause. Some shouted, "Mabuhay ang RPA-ABB."

The group also gave a copy of its letter to the President, asking her to carry out the provisions of the agreement.

In the letter, the group said a renegotiation would "tedious and a waste on time, money and effort."

It also said the allegation that the P500-million financial assistance would go to the pockets of the RPM-P leaders was misleading.

The group claimed that the money would be channeled through various government agencies that will implement the support services identified by the RPM-P/RPA-ABB.

The Church and civil society groups submitted to Ermita a draft of the proposed supplementary peace agreement, including several changes in the original peace pact.

According to the draft, as read by lawyer Andres Hagad during the forum, the RPA-ABB should not be granted belligerency status nor would they be allowed to have police powers.

Although there is no provision on police power in the peace pact, the RPA-ABB has been arresting wanted individuals in the province. The rebels claimed that the arrest was part of their confidential-building measure for the peace negotiation.

The draft also called for an immediate stop in the issuance of special permits to carry firearms to the RPA-ABB.

Hussin says Cabatangan complex not for sale

By Rolly A. San Juan
and Charlie C. Señase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Newly installed Gov. Parouk Hussin of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao said his administration has no plans of selling the 96-heactare Cabatangan property to the city government.

Hussin issued the statement in a bid to quell efforts of the city government to acquire the property.

Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat had earlier said the city government held the right to purchase the property because Zamboangeños decided not to join the ARMM in a plebiscite held in August.

Cabatangan was the site of recent skirmishes between Moro National Liberation Front forces loyal to former ARMM Gov. Nur Misuari and the military, Under the law on the expanded autonomous region, Lobregat said the national government has the right to purchase any ARMM property in cities and provinces that chose exclusion from the region and sell these to the concerned local governments.

However, Hussin maintained that the Cabatangan property has always been owned by the ARMM and that it rightfully belongs to the five-province autonomous region.

Politicians' claim

He rejected the idea that residents of Zamboanga City were clamoring for the purchase of the area, saying this was the claim of "some politicians only."

"Some people are insistent about their demand to buy the Cabatangan property, but if the ARMM does not want to sell it, then they cannot do anything," he said.

Hussin said the Cabatangan Complex would continue to be the ARMM's satellite office to serve the people of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan.

Currently, the ARMM's center of government is in Cotabato City, which also rejected inclusion in the autonomous region.

And city officials there are also itching to recover the area that the ARMM presently occupies.

"We have to assert our legal rights to repossess the land and the improvements therein before the national government takes control of them," Cotabato City Vice Mayor Japal Guiani Jr. said on Thursday.

Guiani said the seven-hectare land, where the regional center is located, has remained the property of the city government although the ARMM was using it.

He said the site used to be the Cotabato airport area, which was donated by the Gutierrez family to the city government.

ORC property

Guiani said the city government only lent the property to the then Office of the Regional Commission (ORC), the ARMM's predecessor.

This was covered by the "Deed of Conditional Donation and Waiver," signed on Oct. 7, 1975 by then ORC Commissioner Simeon Datumanong, now public works secretary, then Mayor Juan Ty and two representatives from the Gutierrez family.

With the abolition of the ORC, a transitory autonomous government established during the Marcos regime, Guiani said the property was technically reverted to the city government.

He stressed that the ARMM's use of the property has remained temporary.

Some city officials said the ARMM leadership should now try to establish the region's center of government within the provinces that opted to be included in the region's scope.

They said it would be unjust for regional officials to continue occupying the property, because Cotabato City is not part of the ARMM.

Javier case hearing resumes today

ILOILO CITY—After a month-long suspension, the hearing of the 15-year-old Evelio Javier murder case resumes today before presiding Judge Rudy Castrojas of the Regional Trial Court in Antique.

The prosecution panel is expected to conduct a redirect examination of its last witness, Arleen Limoso, during the resumption of the hearing of the petition for bail filed by the accused.

Limoso, 43, an accused-turned-state witness, is the 20th witness to be presented by the prosecution since the trial began in 1987.

During the hearings on Nov. 12 and 13, Limoso was cross-examined by principal accused Avelino Javellana and former Antique Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador, who also acted as lawyers for the defense.

Javellana and Pacificador had pointed to discrepancies between Limoso's testimony and that of the other prosecution witnesses in the hearing last month.

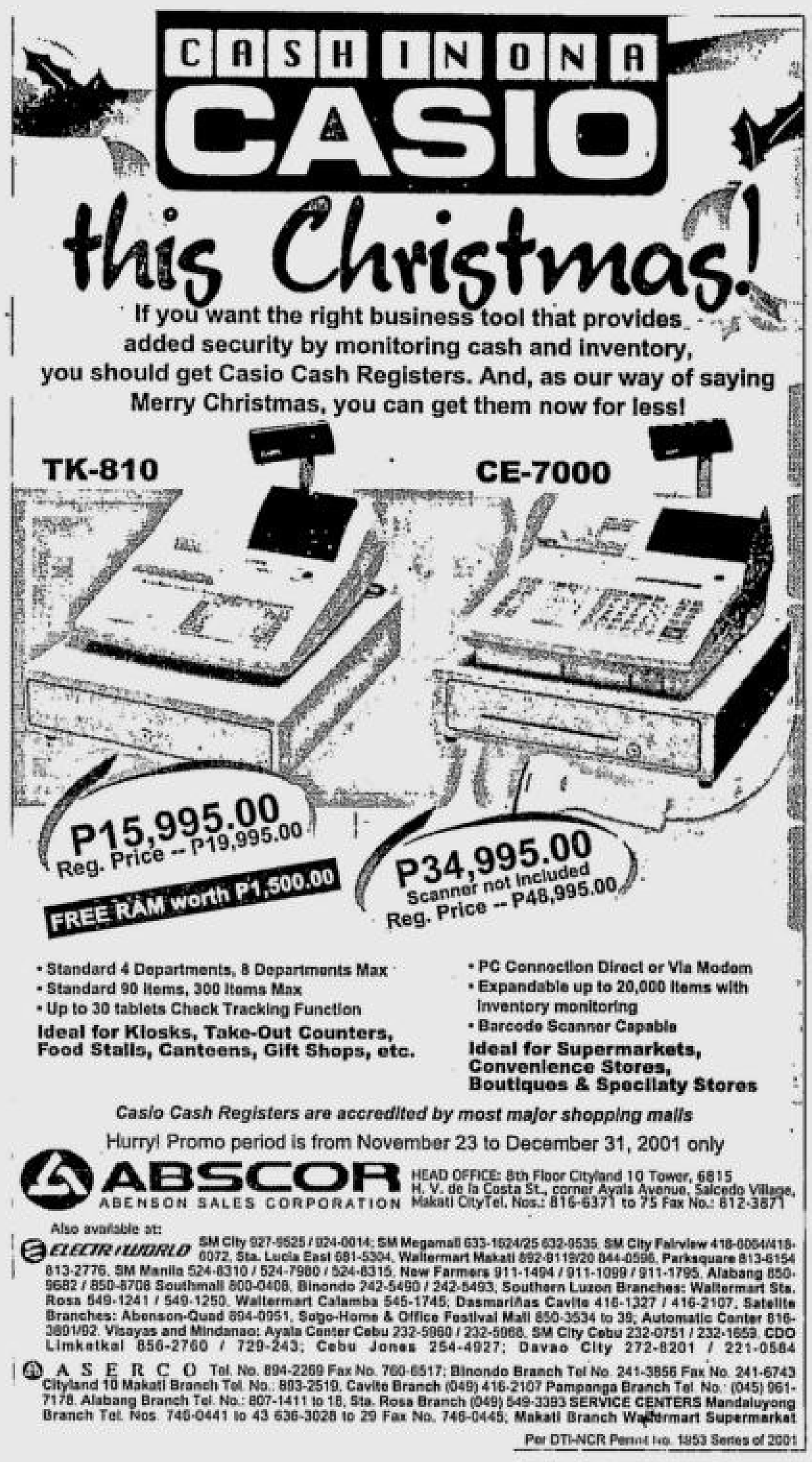
Javellana had said Limoso did not mention seeing him arrive at the Pacificador's rest house in Barangay Taringting in San Jose town, with another accused, Jimmy Punzalan, carrying a sack containing firearms as alleged by the other witnesses.

But Limoso, a former intelligence agent of the Philippine Marines, stuck to his earlier testimony that Pacificador's son, Rodolfo, met with co-accused Eduardo "Boy Muslim" Iran on the eve of and shortly after Javier's murder in February 1986.

Limoso had also testified seeing Javellana inside Pacificador's rest house with Iran on the eve of the killing.

Iran was tagged leader of the armed group that killed Javier and wounded four others in a daylight attack in the San Jose town public plaza on Feb. 10, 1986.

His whereabouts remain unknown even as unconfirmed reports said he was killed in Malaysia last year. ***Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau***



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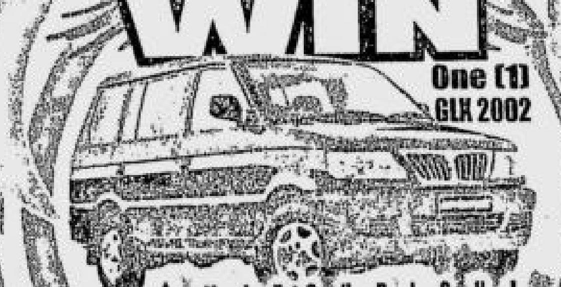

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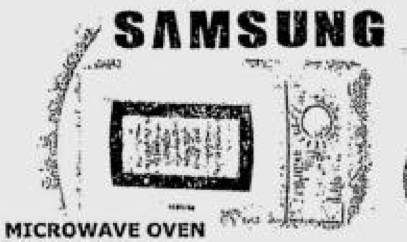

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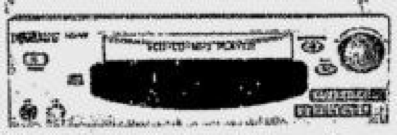

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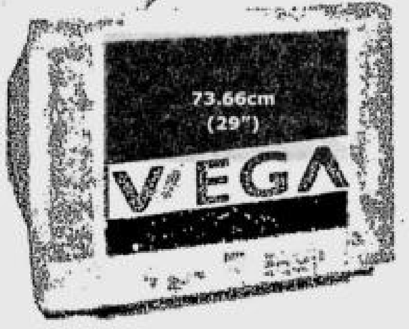

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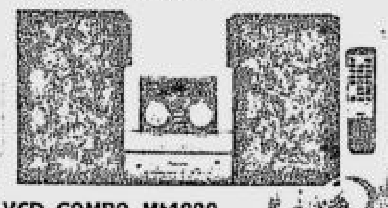

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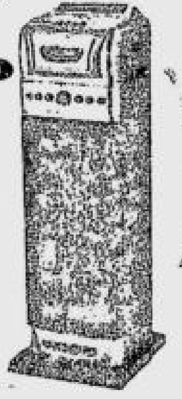

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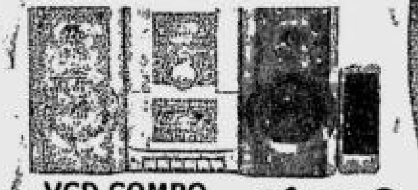

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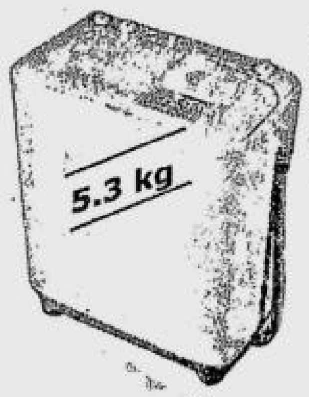

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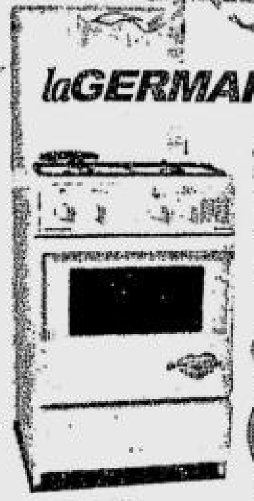

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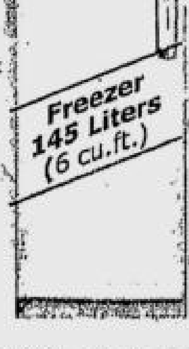

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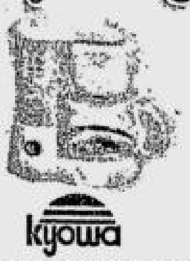

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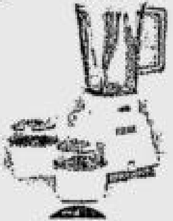

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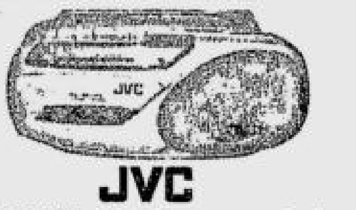

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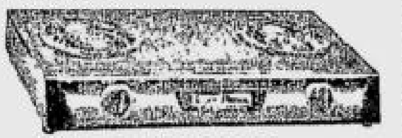

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Isabela execs, farmers back Bt-corn tests

ILAGAN, Isabela—Despite opposition from the Catholic Church and others groups to the field testing of genetically modified organism-laced crops in the province, officials and farmers in seven villages here have signed a manifesto calling for the continuation of the field tests.

About 200 farmers, village chairs and other leaders in the seven barangays assailed the town council's resolution that imposed a moratorium on the Bt-corn (*Bacillus thuringiensis*-laced corn) field tests.

"The moratorium is an act of skeptical and unbounded conclusion, politically motivated, onerous and oppressive to the plight of corn farmers to attain true progress and development in corn production," the manifesto read.

A copy of the manifesto was submitted to Vice Mayor Samuel Maddara, presiding chair of the municipal council, and turned over to the committee on agriculture chaired by Councilor Perlita Gaoiran.

The signatories came from the villages of Alinguigan I, Alinguigan II, Aggasian, Marana II, Alinguigan III, San Andres and Minabang.

The village leaders condemned allegations that the Bt-corn tests are risky and pose grave danger to human health.

They said the anti-GMO groups' statements are "without basis and not scientifically founded."

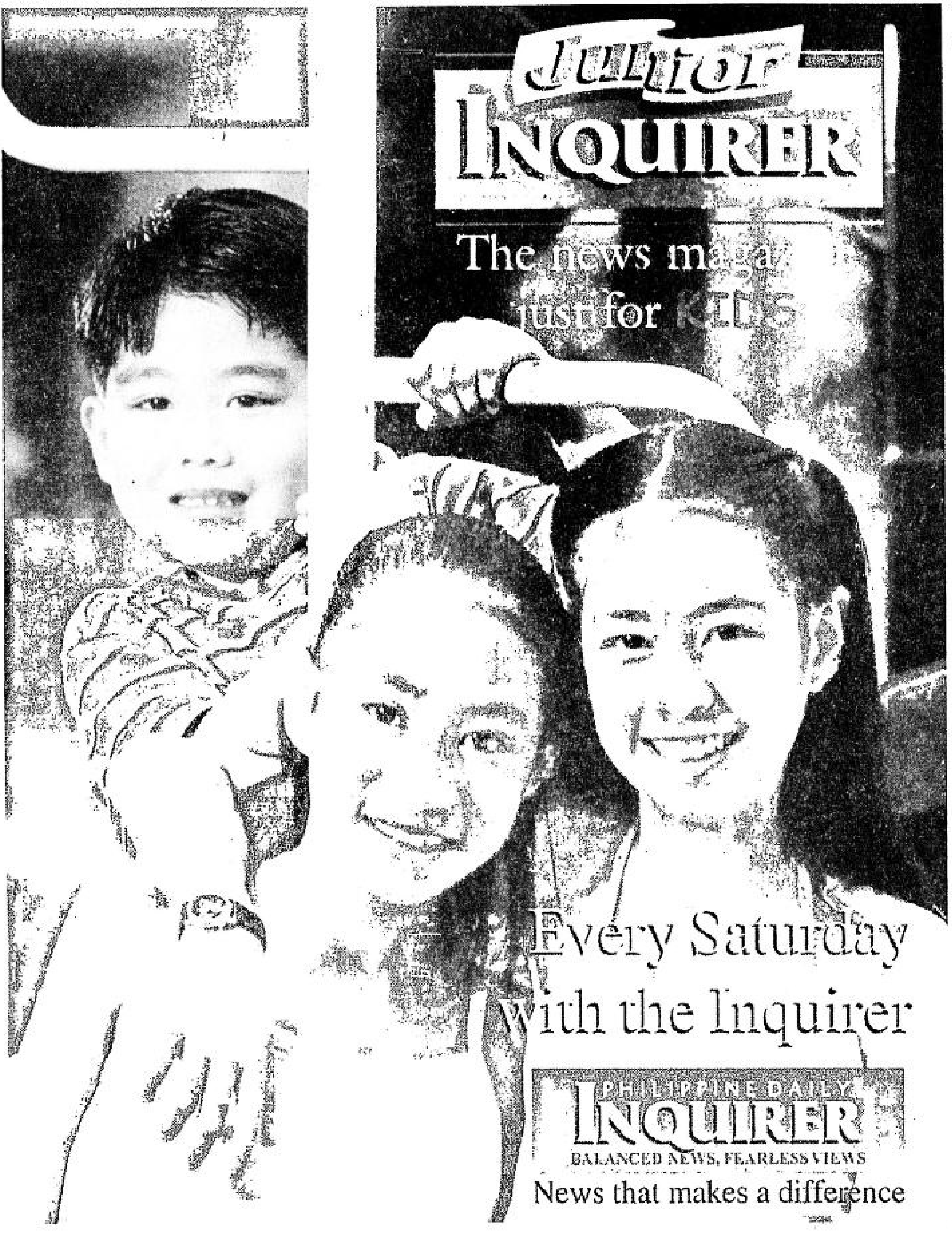
"The conduct of Bt-corn tests at the local levels will give us farmers the rare opportunity to gain experience and learn the technology applied on how a particular product or crop is produced," they said.

The field trial during the wet season (July to November) in Ilagan, according to them, "has not registered any sign of risks or dangers to other crops, to our lives, health and the environment as compared to the highly intoxicating pesticides used in corn production."

The scheduled dry season tests, to be conducted by the agricultural firm Monsanto-Philippines from January to April, should be allowed to push through to enable researchers to gather more scientific data and evaluate the Bt-corn's possible effects on human health and the environment, they said.

Earlier, Eduardo Lao Jr., Northern Luzon territory leader of Monsanto-Philippines, said the council should restudy its resolution on the moratorium on Bt-corn field tests "because not only Alinguigan II but even its neighboring barangays are wanting to have field tests."

Monsanto has acquired a permit to conduct the field tests from the National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***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Fast resolution of coco levy cases pushed

By Debra Jane V. Magallon
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Over a hundred coconut farmer representatives nationwide who attended the National Coconut Farmers Congress here Tuesday expressed disgust over the slow resolution of coconut levy cases before the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan.

"We don't need legalities. We need solutions on how to feed our families," said Norberto Lapaz, a farmer representative from Saranggani.

"This case is about to have its debut. We can't wait for another two years. Whether it is public or not, what we need is money right now," he added.

Outside the Cebu Business Hotel where the congress was held, over a hundred members of militant and civic-oriented groups gathered to show support to the coconut farmers.

Oscar Santos, national director of the Coconut Industry Reform Movement Inc., said these were people's sentiments long buried over the last 16 years.

Ruben Carranza of the Presidential Commission on Good Government said the agency also wanted a speedy resolution of the case filed by small coconut farmers before the Supreme Court in July.

The farmers asked that Presidential Decree 1468 and Executive Order 313 be declared unconstitutional.

PD 1468, issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos, declared the coconut levy as a private fund six years after its collection started in 1972. EO 313, signed during the Estrada administration, rationalized the use of the coconut levy fund and kept it private.

The PCGG, which was among the respondents in the case along with businessman Eduardo Cojuangco, Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat, United Coconut Planters Bank and the Coconut Federation (Cocofed), was given by the Supreme Court until Dec. 23 to give their comments on the petition.

As early as now, Carranza said the PCGG already wanted to make its position clear to the Supreme Court that it is on the side of the farmers. "With this, they should expedite the resolution," he added.

Carranza also asked the farmers not to believe talks that the coconut levy will go to the government's general fund once it is declared public.

"It will go to a trust fund for the farmers. If Congress will put it in the general fund, that is unconstitutional. Anyone can question that," Carranza said.

The coconut levy amounting to P9.6 billion was collected as a forced tax on coconut farmers from 1973 to 1982. The fund has grown to some P130 billion tied up in shares of stocks in several sequestered companies.

About P70 billion is tied up in 47 percent of San Miguel Corp.'s share but Cojuangco, chair of the food and beverage giant, claimed that the investment came from his own pocket.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 21°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 25° Lo 13°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 17°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 20°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 21°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 19°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 26°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 21°
Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 28° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 27° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 23°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/12/14/01

ROUNDUP

Reduced banana earnings

DAVAO CITY—A glut in the world supply of bananas could pull down the region's banana export earnings by about 20 percent. The Department of Trade and Industry in Southern Mindanao said that this year, the banana industry might not even hit last year's revenue of $967 million. "We hoped to hit $1 billion, but this is unlikely unless there is an abnormal volume in the last quarter," Merly Cruz, DTI regional director, said. Amado de Borja Jr., vice president of Marsman Estate Plantation, said Latin America countries like Honduras and Ecuador have been producing more bananas than the Philippines.
Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

'Critical collaboration'

DAVAO CITY—Sen. Manuel Villar said a "critical collaboration" on pressing national issues could unite the Senate but added that the opposition might not be willing to help the Macapagal administration in addressing problems confronting the Filipinos. "We are trying to welcome what they call a critical collaboration, but so far, we have not seen it . . . but we are expecting," he said. Villar also hinted that some senators would be shifting allegiance and this could create a bandwagon effect. "It could happen both ways. They can transfer to us and we can also transfer to them," he said.
Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

More weapons found

LUCENA CITY—The military has discovered another weapons' safety deposit area in Laguna. Maj. Gerard Velez, public information officer of the Southern Luzon Command, said residents of Barangay San Antonio, Kalayaan, Laguna, had disclosed to the Army's 1st Infantry Battalion the location of a cache of assorted weapons hidden by communist rebels in the area. Velez said the weapons included two .30-cal. rifles, one .22-cal. rifle, one Uzi machine pistol, one .22-cal. revolver, one 12-gauge shotgun, assorted bullets, blasting caps and explosives. ***Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Vigilantes kill ex-cop

DAVAO CITY—A former police officer, who got hooked into drugs, became the latest victim of suspected vigilantes in Digos City in Davao del Sur. Hernane Lima was gunned down in front of his family along Rizal Avenue on Sunday night. Witnesses said the Limas had just attended Mass at the Mary Mediatrix Cathedral when the incident occurred. The triggerman, police said, even cut off the victim's ear with a knife before a terrified crowd. Lima became the 12th victim of alleged members of the Digos Death Squad, an anti-drug group, since the killings started in September.
Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Only Gadhafi . . .

(From page A1)

Jamahiriyah weren't counting backward, and yes, the math was right—as long as you're in Moammar Gadhafi's Libya.

Gadhafi insists he is not Libya's president, having long ago handed over the reins to "the power of the people," who supposedly run the country through grass-root committees.

But in reality, it's 59-year-old Gadhafi who still makes all the decisions. So the year is whatever he says it is.

Sometimes it's 1369, counting from the year the Prophet Muhammad died, and sometimes it's 1431, counting from the year of his birth.

Libya's overwhelmingly Muslim population of 5 million celebrates its religious holidays by the traditional Islamic calendar, which is lunar and shorter. It begins with Muhammad's flight ,from Mecca to Medina and is now in the year 1422.

But wait, it gets complicated.

Both of Gadhafi's calendars mirror the Western one, running from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, except that he doesn't use the Arabic translation of the names of the Western months—like most of the Arab world does. He has come up with a new name for each month and some of the changes reflect an apparent desire to settle ancient grievances.

Thus August, named after the Roman Emperor Augustus Caesar, has been renamed Hannibal, after the general from Carthage in North Africa who crossed the Alps with elephants to invade Italy nearly 1,800 years ago.

It's apparently payback for Italy having colonized Libya in 1912.

July, from Julius Caesar, is now called Nasser, after Gamal Abdel Nasser, the late Egyptian president who is Gadhafi's hero.

But almost 30 years after changing the calendars, Gadhafi still doesn't seem to have made up his mind which he prefers.

In January, stationery stores sold day planners with the year 1431 engraved in gold-bordered green.

But a few days into the new year, Libya's newspapers—all government controlled—suddenly backdated themselves to 1369.

There was no explanation, and Gadhafi, who rarely gives interviews, didn't offer one.

Nine months later, it appeared that not many people had noticed the change.

Those same stationery salesmen looked bewildered when asked for a 1369 day planner. They all insisted that the year in Libya was 1431 until they were shown that day's newspaper.

"Oh, he's changed the year again," one salesman said in a resigned tone.

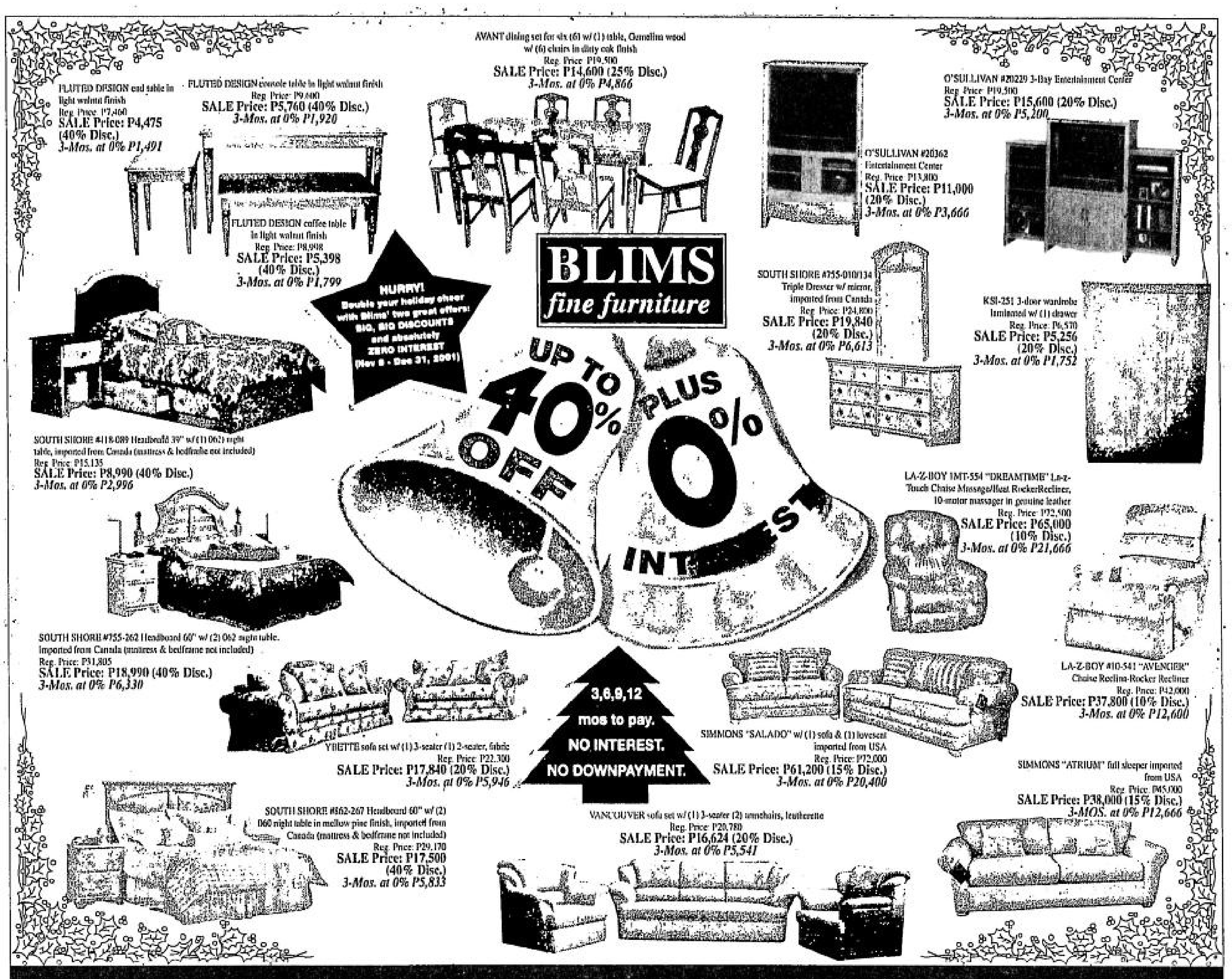
Take a 2001 planner, he suggested.

Indeed, for all Gadhafi's efforts, the 2001 planner that uses the Western month system remains the favorite among the Libyans. And they continue to use the traditional Arabic names for the Western months when celebrating birthdays, planning trips or making appointments. Hannibal and Nasser don't seem to have caught on.

But the Gadhafi-designed dates are used in official correspondence and transactions, as well as by newspapers, to sometimes bamboozling effect.

A September issue of Al-Moallem newspaper used three different calendars: The year on the masthead was 1369; an editorial referred to the 1969 coup that brought Gadhafi to power; and a writer gave the year 1424 when discussing a law the government had passed.

AP



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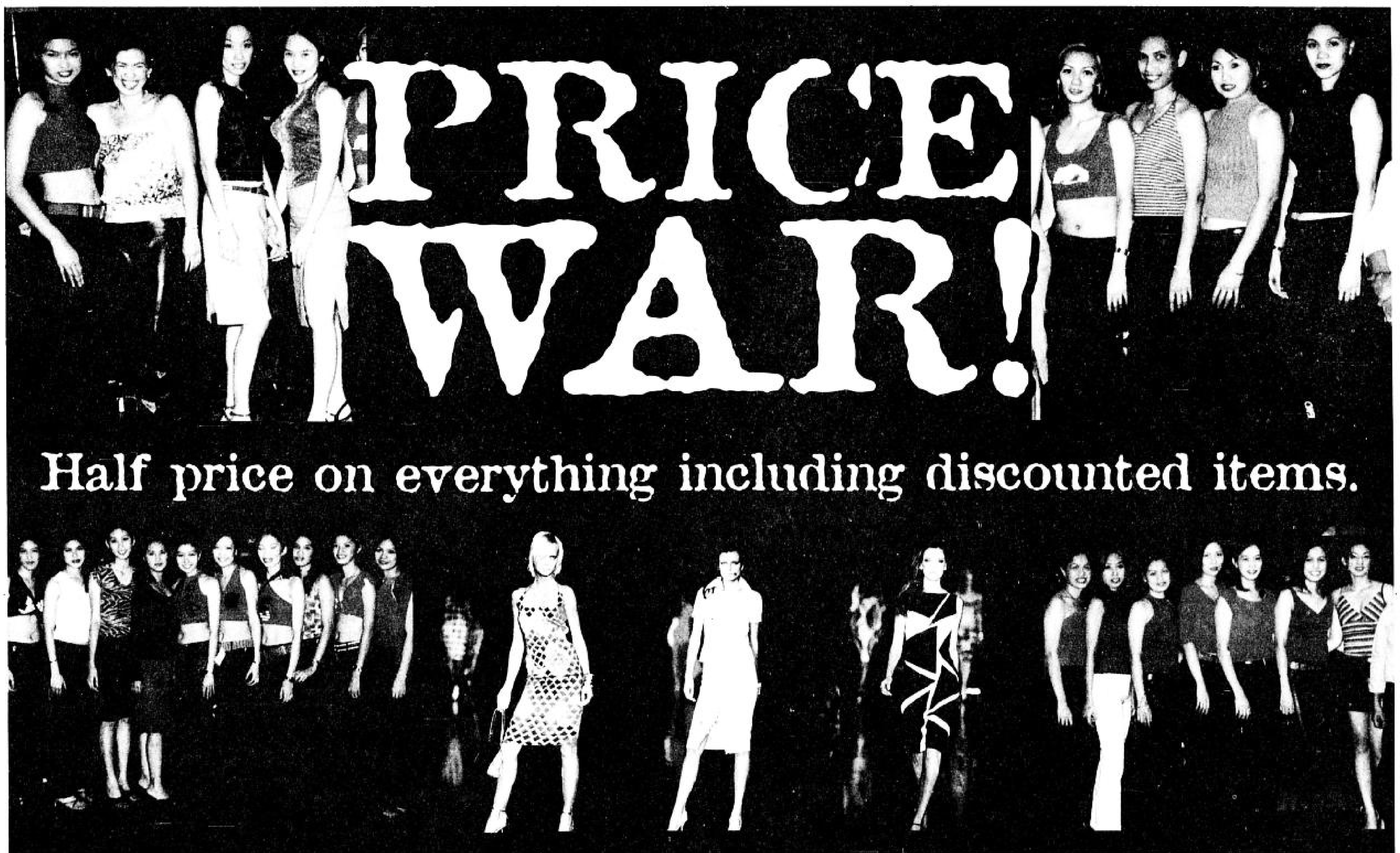

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Coco feud in GMA hands

(From page A1)

to Kirin and other interested investors that would give the government "effective control" of SMC.

The PCGG wants to auction the contested 27-percent stake acquired using coco levy funds and the 14-percent holdings of the Social Security System (SSS) and the Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS) to raise an estimated $2.3 billion.

Bigger deal for farmers

Yorac believes that this would yield a bigger deal for the government and the coconut farmers because foreign investors were likely to pay a minimum of 100-percent premium (at least P100 per share instead of P62 per share as contemplated by Cojuangco) for control of a company rather than a minority stake.

Yorac said SMC management could even add the 15-percent stake earmarked for Kirin to the government block in order to get a better offer.

The sale of the controlling block was "superior" to Cojuangco's proposal because "it will generate cash for the benefit of the millions of coconut farmers and GSIS and SSS members as opposed to the loss of effective control which the Kirin transaction will bring about," Yorac said.

She said the proceeds of the sale of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF), which owns 27 percent of SMC, would be placed under an escrow account until the courts ruled on whether the funds were public or private in nature.

Yorac said the PCGG was open to a provisional arrangement so that the funds could be used provided that the arrangement would not compromise the government's position that these are public funds and that the proceeds be used for the benefit of coconut farmers as a class and not only for those holding coco levy receipts.

Rush

The PCGG said Cojuangco was in a rush to effect the Kirin deal to preempt any court ruling on the contested SMC shares, which include the 20 percent he has claimed as his own but which the government has disputed. Yorac said the court's decision would define rights and interests of the parties concerned.

Cojuangco currently controls eight of the 15 board seats (after the PCGG was unable to unseat the nominees of former President Joseph Estrada for failure to meet the deadline for nominations to these seats).

25-percent premium

Cojuangco said Kirin had agreed to pay a 25-percent premium over SMC's current share price (SMC B shares closed at P49.5 yesterday) for approximately 15 percent of the company.

Under the deal, SMC will sell a combination of unissued shares out of its capital stock and treasury shares, representing the stocks bought back by management in 1999 and 2001 ostensibly to prop up its share prices.

Reacting to criticisms that Kirin's buy-in would unduly dilute the value of the sequestered coco levy shares, Cojuangco said the shares to be sold would have a "negligible effect on the ownership percentage of existing stakeholders before the share buy-back."

Cojuangco even noted that the CIIF would be diluted by only one percent.

Misleading

The PCGG said this claim was misleading because the government stake would go down from 44 percent to 37 percent with the sale of treasury shares and new stocks. Cojuangco apparently used as basis the 38-percent holding of the government bloc before the SMC management implemented its stock repurchase program.

Yorac said, "Cojuangco presents the transaction as beneficial to the country and to SMC and its stockholders. The truth is the planned transaction will be prejudicial to all other SMC stockholders especially the CIIF/SSS/GSIS bloc which today represents effective majority control of the company."

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Yorac said that while the PCGG welcomed the strong interest expressed by Kirin and other foreign brewers in SMC, the country should not take in any foreign investment under any condition.

"It should be fair to the Filipino people and it should not unduly transfer control of the corporation to persons whose control is unwarranted." She said the PCGG had already informed Kirin about the PCGG's concerns on the deal.

"We don't mind foreign investors coming. In fact, we welcome it. What we are questioning is the manner and the resulting effect on the corporate structure. We have made a counter-proposal because we are not negative about foreign investor interest in the company."

Another worry

Besides the possible dilution of the government-controlled shares, the PCGG is worried that the Kirin deal would give Cojuangco effective control of SMC.

The Kirin deal is reportedly the first in a two-stage plan of Cojuangco to firm up his control of SMC. Cojuangco is planning to use the $540 million in proceeds of the Kirin buy-in for a corporate buy-out of the CIIF shares.

Kirin Brewery Co. Ltd. ranks eighth among the top beer marketers in the world. Its flagship beer brand, Kirin, Lager, is the fourth largest in the world. Kirin holds a market share of nearly 40 percent in Japan.

PCGG Commissioner Victoria Avena said the sale of the government's controlling block of SMC shares, including the 27 percent under the CIIF, would mean that there would be no need for a compromise agreement on the coco levy.

Avena said the sale of the CIIF shares in San Miguel and the stake of GSIS and SSS in the food and beverage giant would mean more benefits for the coco farmers, without going through the complications of a settlement.

"It's an idea that we floated," she said.

Avena said the PCGG also welcomed the proposal of the Multi-Sectoral Task Force on the coco levy for the nominees of the 14 holding companies to "issue an absolute and unconditional deed of assignment" to the PCGG on the San Miguel shares they were holding in trust supposedly for the coconut farmers.

Avena pressed the nominees of the 14 holding firms to name their principals. ***(See related story on Page A1.)***

"What's their problem? Why are they not disclosing. For all you know, the principal could be a controversial figure," she said.

Avena said the proceeds from the sale could be used for the development of the coconut industry.

Instead of a trust fund for the shares as proposed in the compromise settlement before, the sale would liquefy these shares and enable their investment the interests of which would benefit coconut farmers.

There will be no need for a compromise settlement anymore if the sale of these shares pushes through, Avena explained. ***With a report from Donna S. Cueto***

Angara, Drilon, Roco explain roles in coco deal

(From page A1)

"I believe that the PCGG is creating a bogus issue because it's very clear that the coconut levy fund belongs to the CIIF (Coconut Industry Investment Fund), and that is for and in behalf of the coconut farmers," Angara said.

The CIIF owns the 14 holding firms.

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez said Accra set up the holding firms upon the instructions of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Chavez has accused Angara, Education Secretary Raul Roco and Senate President Franklin Drilon, two former Accra lawyers, of putting up the holding firms.

Chavez said Angara, Roco and Drilon had to explain what they knew of the coco levy issue, particularly about the holding corporations that eventually benefited Cojuangco.

"The explanation now becomes imperative because somehow they were able to find responsible positions in government, and they cannot gloss over this issue," he said.

Chavez also asked Roco and Drilon to identify the real owners of the holding firms.

Angara asked the parties involved in the levy fund controversy to wait for the Supreme Court decision on the nature of the fund.

The Supreme Court had earlier declared that the funds were imbued with public character, paving the way for the sequestration of the coco levy shares in San Miguel.

But the high court remanded the case to the Sandiganbayan to determine if the funds had ceased to be public in character after Cojuangco's group insisted that these were private in character.

Angara expressed apprehension over a proposal to declare the funds public because it would defeat the real purpose for which it was created.

Should the funds be declared public, it will go to general appropriations, not to the farmers, according to Angara.

Rehash

Roco and Drilon accused Chavez of rehashing an old issue.

"*Kulang lang yan sa pansin* (He lacks attention). *Namumulitika* (He's politicking)," said Roco of Chavez.

He berated Chavez as the "only solicitor general fired by former President Corazon Aquino."

Roco was at the Senate yesterday to witness the plenary debate on the proposed national budget for next year.

For his part, Drilon said he did not take part in any transactions for San Miguel when he was still an Accra lawyer as he was in charge of labor cases.

Drilon, who joined Accra in 1976, said the practice of law in Accra was compartmentalized according to fields of specialization. Lawyers were assigned specific fields of law practice such as corporate, litigation, labor and taxation.

He said that as a matter of corporate practice, clients of the firm would now and then request lawyers to act as incorporators and nominees in holding companies that clients would establish.

This, he said, was the case of the holding companies formed to acquire the San Miguel shares in the 1980s.

"Thus, I had no personal knowledge or participation whatsoever in the acquisition of San Miguel shares, except to act as a nominee and incorporator in one of the holding companies," Drilon said.

He said the company was called First Meridian Development.

Drilon said he was not a partner in charge of the Cojuangco accounts in Accra, and therefore, had no personal knowledge of how the CIIF companies or coconut levy funds were managed.

Hearsay

"Whatever information I have about this transaction is purely hearsay," he said.

Drilon also said he was never impleaded in any of the cases filed in relation to the San Miguel acquisition.

"As a matter of practice, the shares in the First Meridian Development were endorsed in blank after incorporation," he said. "That was the last time I heard of this matter."

Chavez said Roco could not just make light of his participation in the setting up of the holding corporations.

Chavez said that Roco had represented both Cojuangco and Andres Soriano at one point.

"He has to account for his past misdeeds," Chavez told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. He was in Bangkok.

He said Roco and other Accra lawyers were "part of one big cabal led by Angara that aided the setting up of the coco monopoly and the drafting of executive orders issued by President (Ferdinand) Marcos."

Chavez said these notable Accra lawyers were the ones who authored Marcos' controversial decrees regarding the coco levy.

He said that when Roco formed the holding companies, he was still under the employ of Cojuangco.

It was only when Cojuangco and Soriano started fighting that Roco decided to stick with Soriano.

Chavez said the junior partners of Accra could not be made a scapegoat by Roco, Drilon and Angara to avoid liability for the setting up of the 14 holding companies.

Coco Roco

"Roco was really the principal player. Drilon was a labor lawyer. It was Roco who was orchestrating all these things. Coco-Roco," Chavez said.

He said that there was pressure for the Sorianos and those holding San Miguel shares to sell them to Cojuangco, who used the CIIF holding companies.

He described as "hogwash" Roco's claim that he did not know the principals behind the buyers of the San Miguel shares placed in the 14 holding firms.

"It's either he's fooling the public or he pretends to be a stupid lawyer," Chavez said.

Asked to comment on Roco's allegation that he was using the issue to get attention, Chavez said:

"In fact, many are taking notice of me because I look better than him, and I'm in a better shape than him," he said, laughing.

Negotiations no longer an option

(From page A1)

vehicle heading for the frontlines. "We are launching the battle now."

The new offensive against the last al-Qaida redoubt near the Pakistani border came after talks for their surrender to local Afghan militia collapsed.

Some 4,000 Pakistani troops also fanned out opposite across Afghanistan's White Mountains to prevent the escape of Bin Laden and his followers, Pakistani officers said in Peshawar.

US warplanes staged huge bombing raids on and around al-Qaida's complex of caves and tunnels in Tora Bora.

One plane, hidden behind clouds, dropped four or five bombs into a valley barely 500 meters from the Afghan frontline command post, setting off a ball of flame and a chain of huge explosions.

Hundreds of Bin Laden's fighters are believed to be grouped around the summits of the White Mountains on the Pakistani border.

There were also signs of a growing presence of US and British special forces in the region.

The Washington Post, which said US military operatives had opposed Wednesday's surrender deal with the al-Qaida fighters, reported that 60 British Special Air Service and 40 US Special Forces troops were in Tora Bora, helping the hunt for Bin Laden.

Late Wednesday, two large helicopters were seen landing about 3 km from Tora Bora mountain.

B-1 crash

While the Afghan militiamen were encircling the al-Qaida fighters, a B-1 supersonic bomber providing air support for the US-led forces on Wednesday crashed into the Indian Ocean, about 48 km north of its base on the British island of Diego Garcia, the US Central Command said.

All four crewmembers were rescued and the cause of the crash was under investigation, it said.

In Kabul, the head of Afghanistan's incoming interim government, Hamid Karzai, met outgoing President Burhanuddin Rabbani and key ministers Thursday to prepare the transfer of power on Dec. 22.

The 43-year-old Pashtun royalist, who was named head of a six-month interim administration under a UN-brokered accord last week in Bonn, has already received a pledge of support from Rabbani—a strong critic of the Bonn deal that he says was imposed by foreigners.

UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi was in Kabul Tuesday and Wednesday to negotiate the presence in the capital of a UN-mandated international peacekeeping force agreed in Bonn, but on which the dominant Northern Alliance now appears to be backtracking.

A spokesperson for the defense ministry said Wednesday that the Northern Alliance, which will hold the key defense, interior and foreign affairs posts in the new administration, favored a force of 1,000 UN-mandated soldiers in Kabul, but only to guard the premises of the new interim government.

The Bonn accord provided for Kabul to be demilitarized and policing duties handed over to the UN force.

But Northern Alliance officials have said they will keep their troops in the city and will not allow any patrols by the UN force.

Britain has said it is prepared to play a "leading role" in the force, to which other members of the US-led anti-terrorism coalition have also pledged troops.

Annan warning

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan cautioned against any widening of the US war on terrorism to Somalia and Iraq.

"I have no evidence or reason to support the position that the war should be carried on to other areas," Annan said in Stockholm.

A US congressional panel on Wednesday overwhelmingly approved a resolution citing Iraq as "a mounting threat to the United States, its allies, and international peace and security."

In Amman, high-ranking officials said they saw Yemen's Islamists and former fighters in Afghanistan as prime targets in the next, post-Afghan phase of the US-led war on terror.

They said Sudan was also a leading candidate for "surgical" strikes against al-Qaida bases there, which could be carried out with the accord of the central government, "given that these cells are generally established in zones not controlled by the local authorities." ***AFP***

RP forms elite team to fetch Nur in KL

(From page A1)

he added.

Neither Guingona nor the other officials who attended the meeting—Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, among them—provided details of what was discussed during the meeting, including the exact date of the scheduled deportation.

Also in attendance at the top-level meeting were Justice Undersecretary Wenceslao Andanar, who represented Interior Secretary Jose Lina, and Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Misuari could not expect help anymore from his former allies in the Organization of Islamic Conference.

Tiglao said the OIC Committee of the Eight agreed with the Philippines' position that Misuari violated the 1996 peace agreement that he signed with the government when he ordered his followers to attack Jolo, Sulu, on Nov. 19.

The committee has also decided not to intervene in Misuari's behalf, Tiglao said.

Asked how the ex-governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao would be arrested, Golez said: "Since he is a former government official, we would have to observe certain formalities. He would be treated with respect but with firmness."

Not like Estrada

Director General Leandro Mendoza, chief of the Philippine National Police, said Misuari's arrest "would not be like that of (then President Joseph) Estrada, when many policemen were dispatched because of the demonstrations."

Mendoza said the arresting team would be composed of police and military personnel.

"Our thrust would be to secure the warrant of arrest and serve it upon Misuari's return," he said.

Misuari was charged with rebellion here after the attack pulled off by his armed faction of the Moro National Liberation Front in Jolo days before the ARMM elections.

He was arrested by Malaysian police in Sabah on Nov. 24 and subsequently held for illegal entry. Malaysian authorities also investigated him for alleged involvement in the abductions pulled off by the Abu Sayyaf on the resort island of Sipadan in April last year. But no evidence was found to link him to the abductions.

Meeting in Qatar

The DFA told the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security that the OIC Committee of the Eight reached the consensus on Misuari during informal consultations on the sidelines of the OIC Foreign Ministers emergency meeting on Dec. 11 in Doha, Qatar.

The emergency meeting was called in Doha to discuss the escalating hostilities between Israel and Palestine.

"The committee noted that with Misuari's alleged act of rebellion, he went against the spirit of the 1996 peace agreement," Tiglao said, adding:

"The consensus of the consultations was that the Misuari problem is a purely internal matter of the Philippines (that does) not warrant the interference of the Committee of the Eight."

The DFA said the committee recognized as "a fact" that Parouk Hussin had replaced Misuari as ARMM governor.

Hussin is part of the 15-member MNLF central committee that took over the MNLF chairmanship from Misuari.

It is the Committee of the Eight that monitors the implementation of the OIC-brokered peace agreement between the government and the then Misuari-led MNLF.

It consists of Indonesia as chair, with Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Brunei, Somalia, Bangladesh, Senegal and Libya as members.

Tiglao said the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security had finalized the arrangements for Misuari's deportation from Malaysia and his subsequent arrest and detention.

But he said the Malaysian government had yet to officially notify the DFA of the date of Misuari's deportation.

After saying earlier that she wanted Misuari to remain in Malaysia in the meantime, the President said last week that the Philippines would now take him back.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad had been reported as saying that his government might have to release Misuari if the Philippine government did not want him.

Mahathir said Misuari's prolonged presence in Malaysia could sour up its friendly relations with the Philippines.

Leniency

But while the OIC had recognized the 15-member MNLF central committee as the true leader of the group, it was appealing to the Philippine government to be lenient toward Misuari, ARMM Governor Hussin said at a forum at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

At the same forum, Eduardo Ermita, the President's adviser on the peace process, confirmed that the OIC Committee of the Eight had reached a consensus regarding Misuari.

Guingona had sent letters to the OIC in August and November stating that the Philippine government recognized the Council of 15, and not Misuari, as the true representative of the MNLF.

Hussin stressed that any form of leniency that the government could extend to Misuari would depend on "the kind of violation that he committed."

"Nobody is above the law in our country, or any country for that matter," Hussin said. "They can't just drop the charges because these are serious violations."

Ermita aired the assurance that Misuari would be accorded treatment due a former leader.

"On the matter of whether we will be lenient or not, the assurance is that he will be treated very well (according to) his stature," Ermita said, adding:

"After all, he's done so much for the movement and the people down South, except that he just did not do it (well) enough. So there's no question on how well the government will treat him."

Both Ermita and Hussin attended the launching of a series of dialogues on the peace process in Mindanao at the Sulo Hotel. ***With a report from TJ Burgonio***

Squabbling farmers' groups agree to make 'united stand'

By Donna S. Cueto

VARIOUS coconut farmers' groups, which have had opposing views on the coco levy settlement, agreed to work for the freeing of the 31-percent shareholdings in San Miguel Corp. so these could be used to benefit farmers by early next year.

According to the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC), the Multi-Sectoral Task Force on the Coco Levy, to which it belongs, was able to convene with the various farmers' groups and government officials to make a "united stand" in addressing the coconut levy fund issue on Dec 7 and 10.

The meetings were attended by Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Haydee Yorac, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor and Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) administrator Danilo Coronacion.

The BBC said that the Multi-Sectoral Task Force on the Coco Levy had "agreed to unite and speak in one voice that the coco levy funds that form 31 percent of the uncontested shares of San Miguel Corp. should be returned to the farmers, if possible early next year."

BBC co-chair Jose Concepcion Jr. said that the participants in the meetings and all the interested parties hoped to present a "unified proposal" on the matter for approval to President Macapagal-Arroyo, so she could issue an executive order by Valentine's Day next year.

The BBC statement said that Yorac, Montemayor and Coronacion also agreed to help free the 31-percent coco levy shares in San Miguel.

One of the common positions arrived at was the identification by the nominees of the 14 holding companies that have control over the 31 percent of the San Miguel stocks of the "principal owners" of these stocks.

They said that the nominees of the 14 holding companies should also "issue an absolute and unconditional deed of assignment" to the PCGG.

"This way a truly meaningful trust fund may be set up for the small coconut farmers and the development of the coconut industry," the BBC statement said.

The target date for the completion of this task is on Jan. 31 next year.

Among those who participated in the meeting last Dec. 7 held at the Club Filipino in San Juan were Concepcion, former Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada, Efren Villaseñor of the Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Magsasaka at Manggagawa sa Niyugan (PKSMMN), representatives of KAMMPIL, Coconut Industry Reform Movement, Pakisama and Philippine Peasant Institute.

Concepcion said that the participants agreed to designate him and Tañada to meet with all the affected sectors, including the Philippine Coconut Producers' Federation, to "fine-tune the operational aspects of the agreement, and to invite Yorac, Montemayor and Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo to such meetings."

Concepcion said that the agreement should be based on these conditions.

First is that "all small coconut farmers regardless of organizational affinity will benefit from the funds."

Second is for the "principal owners of the trust fund to be identified or for their nominees to issue an absolute and unconditional deed of assignment to the PCGG."

Executing . . .

(From page A1)

IRA leaders.

"We have a long history of terrorism, but no one called for the re-imposition of the death penalty because this creates martyrs (out of IRA leaders)," Hood said in a press briefing yesterday with a selected number of reporters.

Britain abolished the death penalty in 1965.

Hood, who's a consultant on the death penalty to the United Nations and a member of the British foreign secretary's death penalty panel, debunked the arguments of pro-death penalty proponents that capital punishment is the ultimate deterrence to crime.

Certainty of punishment

"What is more important is the certainty of punishment," he said. "It is much more important to have a system that ensures certainty of punishment, than severity of punishment," he said.

Hood was invited by the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) to generate enlightened debates before the House panels on the revision of laws and civil, political and human rights, which are now tackling several bills seeking the abolition of the death penalty law including others that call for the expansion of its coverage.

Hood said justice could still be served if Estrada is meted out due punishment other than death.

Historically, there were only few instances in which heads of state were judicially executed.

"I think the Philippine public should understand that rarely are heads of state executed," he said, responding to comments that many Filipinos want to retain capital punishment solely for the purpose of executing Estrada, if found guilty.

Hood pointed to an increasing trend among countries in the world to abolish capital punishment. The death penalty has been abolished in all the countries of Europe.

Hood has written and co-authored several books on criminology, the administration of justice, penology and capital punishment.

Abu Sayyaf hostages sought help of 'Teddyboy' Locsin

(From page A1)

because she had "no money" to pay ransom.

Montealegre, her sister Divine, Divine's husband Raul "Buddy" Recio, and the couple's son RJ were among those abducted on May 27 by the Abu Sayyaf from the Palawan resort Dos Palmas.

The Recios somehow managed to dash to freedom but Montealegre was left behind. She was freed only last month in unclear circumstances.

When contacted by the INQUIRER, Recio confirmed that he had sought Locsin's help but that he ended up paying ransom, anyway.

"All I can say is that … I didn't like the way he treated our appeal for help," Recio said. Asked what Locsin did, he said: "I don't think he did anything."

Earlier in the day, Gunigundo held a press conference to announce that the Recios had sought "the help of their favorite congressman" but that he did not know the nature of the help extended.

"We have to find out from the witnesses," he said.

Gunigundo said the Recios and Montealegre would be invited to attend the re-opening on Dec. 19 of the House defense committee's inquiry on ransom payments to the Abu Sayyaf.

But Gunigundo declined to name the legislator. "All I can say is the congressman is from Metro Manila and the Recio family is from Makati City," he said, adding that Raul Recio was involved in the "publishing business."

Travel writers

Locsin said Raul and Divine Recio came to his office "about their problem" shortly after the House defense committee, of which he is a member, conducted a hearing in Basilan.

He could not remember the date of the meeting but his staff said it was sometime in August.

Locsin said that the Recios were his constituents and that he knew them because they were "travel writers."

He said the Recios thought of approaching him when they saw him in TV reports of the committee hearing in Basilan.

"So I made my rounds," he said. "I talked to some Muslim leaders (to tell the Abu Sayyaf) to have pity on (Angela) because she has no money for ransom."

He said the leaders were not connected to the Abu Sayyaf but had contacts with people who did. "There was no money involved. None at all," he added.

Locsin wondered why "some people are putting mystery" in his effort to help.

Asked whether he shared this information with members of the committee, he said: "I talked to different congressmen from Mindanao and they all said the same thing—'Lay off, she might get hurt.'"

Locsin said he did not know what happened next. He was not even sure if Montealegre had been released, and asked the INQUIRER to verify the matter before printing this report.

"She might really get hurt," he said.

Political help

Recio was miffed when told about Locsin's statements.

"See? He does not even know if she's been released," Recio said. "He didn't even tell me what he was doing (about the problem)."

Recio said what he had asked from Locsin was "political help." He did not elaborate.

"It cannot be money. I was expecting political help because he is a congressman and he has his connections. That was my last option," Recio said.

He said he did not follow up on Locsin and noted that "nothing came up" in the news about what the congressman could have done.

And because his sister-in-law had been in captivity for six months, Recio said he gave in to the Abu Sayyaf demand. "I paid ransom," he said.

Recio was likewise miffed at Gunigundo for announcing that he would be summoned before the committee without informing him.

"I won't be there. They should have asked me first," Recio said, adding that he and his family would be "out of the country" at the time of the hearing.

Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., chair of the defense committee, confirmed that the Recio couple would be invited to the hearing. But he said RJ Recio would be spared the ordeal.

Earlier, Pichay said the committee decided to reopen the inquiry that had been terminated in order to hear the testimony of Sen. Sergio Osmeña III.

The senator had claimed to help deliver P17 million in ransom for the release of Dos Palmas hostage Reghis Romero and two others.

Pichay said the committee would formally invite Osmeña to appear at the House hearing. But he said Osmeña could not be compelled to do so and would most likely give priority to the Senate inquiry.

He also said the House and Senate committees would likely hold a joint inquiry on the issue.

Old friend

In Malacañang, the spokesperson of President Macapagal-Arroyo said the man who allegedly brokered and delivered ransom for the freedom of at least three Abu Sayyaf hostages was her as well as his longtime acquaintance.

"I am told that an old friend, Mr. Jorge Baviera, has been dragged into a controversy, that (Sen. Panfilo) Lacson's very cheap shot against me assumes that he was part of a ransom deal," a somber Rigoberto Tiglao told reporters at a briefing.

"It is not at all fair for a senator of the republic to smear the reputation of a private citizen who does not have the resources to fight back," Tiglao said.

The other day, Lacson said Baviera had a hand in the ransom negotiations for the freedom of hostage Lalaine Chua. He said P6 million was paid for Chua's release and that P3 million supposedly went to Tiglao and Baviera.

In reaction, Tiglao said he was both happy and sad over Lacson's charges.

"I am happy that Mr. Lacson, with his fantastic fabrication, is proving more and more to our people to be the rogue that he is, without any sense of conscience and civility," Tiglao said.

Baviera and Tiglao are members of the First Quarter Storm Foundation, an association of circa 1970 activists.

"I see him in social occasions and some parties in the old association we set up, the FQS Foundation," Tiglao said.

He said Baviera was likewise a colleague of Ms Macapagal in the Association of Filipino Chinese Understanding 20 years ago. "But they are not close at all," he said.

Tiglao, however, said he did not know the background of Stef Saño, an anchor of radio RMN Manila's "Bantay OCW" program who goes by the alias of Cesar Padilla.

Sources said Saño was known as a close associate of Baviera and was undertaking "special projects."

"Stef, from what has been told me, is also a former activist," Tiglao said.

The names of Saño and Baviera first came out in the INQUIRER in June, when the Abu Sayyaf released Dos Palmas hostages Francis Ganzon and Kimberly Jao Uy.

The two men were described as the ones who allegedly delivered P5 million for Uy's release.

"He's my friend," Saño said of Baviera.

But he denied they had any role in the ransom negotiations and delivery. He said he merely helped the Uy's family air an appeal for her freedom.

Saño was previously connected with Robert Aventajado, chief negotiator of the Estrada administration with the Abu Sayyaf during the Sipadan hostage crisis. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo; Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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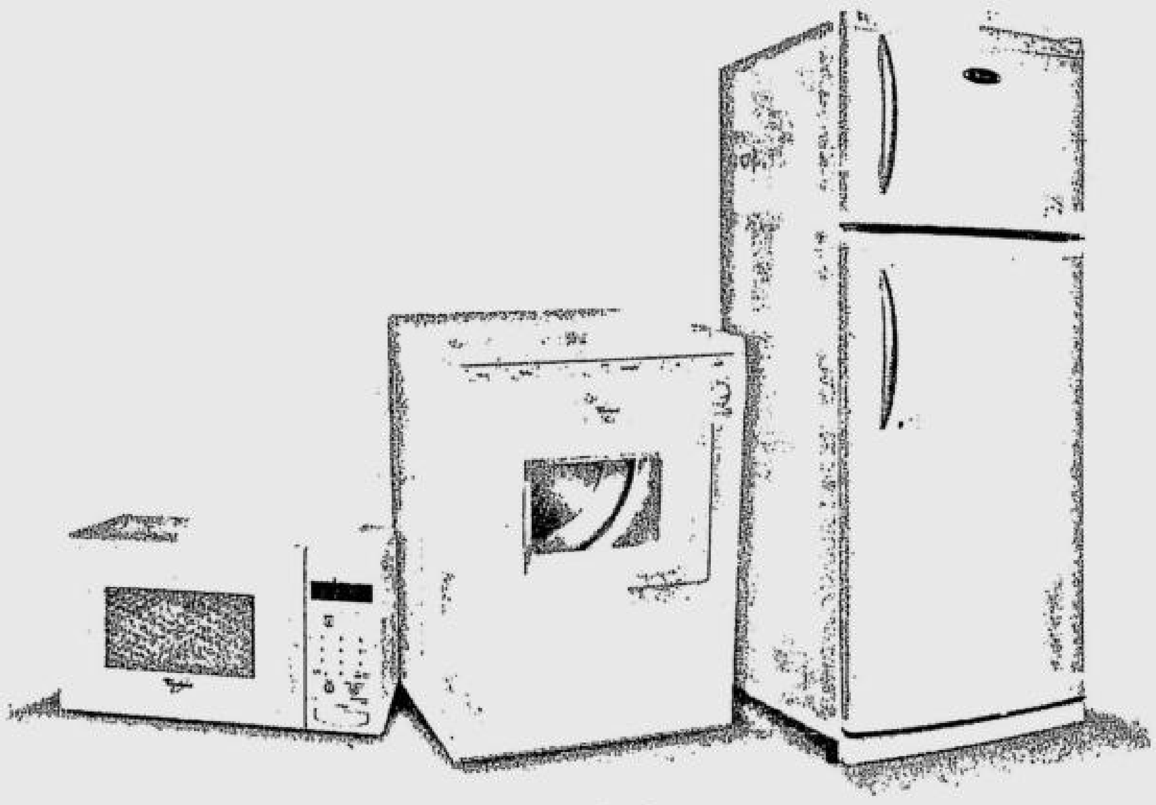

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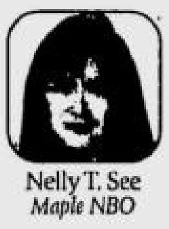
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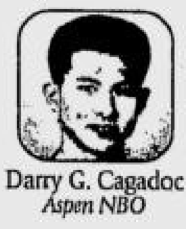
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Mulawin NBO

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Roselle C. Tagle, *Mulawin NBO*
Lolita H. Quijano, *Molave NBO*
Bernice B. Abellera-Reyes, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Marie C. Suazo, *Birch NBO*
Edward Y. Yap, *Sequoia NBO*
Armando E. Legaspi*, *Mulawin NBO*
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Angelina C. Lim**, *Palm NBO*
Silvia A.Yu, *Linden NBO*
Beatrice L. Uy, *Cypress NBO*
Fely O. Chiu, *Osmanthus NBO*
Alice L. Dee, *Redwood NBO*
Evelyne S. Yu, *Maple NBO*
Betina S. Novera, *Tindalo NBO*
Jean T. Ong**, *Aspen NBO*
Vinia B. Camacho, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Evelyn L. Monzon*, *Osmanthus NBO*
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Ma. Rositte S. Tan, *Banyan NBO*
Leonora T. Hernandez,*Mulawin NBO*
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Julieta A. Rivera, *Acacia NBO*
Zulita C. Vasallo, *Tindalo NBO*
Roselle B. Odiamar, *Linden NBO*
Yony T. Quan, *Redwood NBO*
Bayani V. Sabater, *Redwood NBO*
Adelaida R. Camus, *Mulawin NBO*
Roberto L. Teng, *Birch NBO*
Carmelita S. Chua**, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Myrna J. Salanguit, *Mulawin NBO*
Marcelina B. Cheng, *Mulawin NBO*
Maria Cristina H. Gandola, *Mulawin NBO*
Katherine Rose T. Sin, *Maple NBO*
Severina S. Novera, *Tindalo NBO*
Rebecca M. Peralta, *Tindalo NBO*
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Maribeth D. Coyco, *Redwood NBO*
Priscilla S. Marling, *Mulawin NBO*
Teresita P. Santiago, *Tindalo NBO*
Annabelle J. Pineda, *Tindalo NBO*
Rhoda A. Bumanlag, *Durian NBO*
Josephine G. Pamintuan***, *Mulawin NBO*
Roberto Obaña, *Tindalo NBO*
Luzviminda O. Co, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Ma. Elizabeth S. Correa, *Mulawin NBO*
Sanjana A. Amarnani, *Banyan NBO*
Apolinario C. Bonilla, *Banyan NBO*
Angelita R. Legaspi**, *Mulawin NBO*
Eloisa M. Peñaranda**, *Tindalo NBO*
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Edna A. Duran, *Cedar NBO*
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Myra C. Cruz, *Redwood NBO*
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Evangeline O. Nepomuceno, *Mulawin NBO*
Ma. Corazon R. Aguada-Cruz, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Soledad G. Castro, *Olive NBO*
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Adelaida M. Balaag, *Tindalo NBO*
Gem Marie C. Sim, *Eucalyptus NBO*
Alex A. Chua, *Redwood NBO*
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Grace D. Tuaño, *Cedar NBO*
Jaime C. Gaw, *Osmanthus NBO*
Lirio S. Olorvida, *Mulawin NBO*
Teresita O. Posadas, *Mulawin NBO*
Eliza A. Cayab, *Sequoia NBO*
Marina C. Ting, *Maple NBO*
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Sabina Y. Cadampog*, *Acacia NBO*
Lobella A. Gonzales, *Molave NBO*
Sonny G. Chua, *Osmanthus NBO*
Samuel P. Antasuda, *Sequoia NBO*
Arnel N Gomez, *Cedar NBO*
Ma. Mercedes P. Adriano, *Olive NBO*
Fernanda S. Estrada, *Acacia NBO*
Marites M. Nicolas, *Redwood NBO*
Felisa D. Lo, *Banyan NBO*
Susan S. Lacson, *Molave NBO*
Teresita P. Gutierrez**, *Cypress NBO*
Maria Corazon J. Dorado, *Chestnut NBO*
Ernesto B. Co, *Banyan NBO*
Sonia P. Tibay, *Tindalo NBO*
Ramil de Guitos, *Birch NBO*
Lily N. Lee, *Tindalo NBO*

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Palm NBO
Evangeline S. Tiu**** • Angelina C. Lim** • Josefina T. Montes** • Anita C. Pua*

BRONZE LEVEL

Aspen NBO
Antonio L. Sy****
Helen C. Ang**
Nena T. Ng**
Jean T. Ong**
Martina C. Tan*
Evelyn U. Lim*

Birch NBO
David C. De Austria****
Lorenza D. Huang***
Lorna C. Chiu**
Feliciana T. Go**
Frederick J. Suazo**
Magdalita T. Chua**
Benito Chung**
Loretta R. De Austria*

Chestnut NBO
Estella S. Ng****
Marilou S. Arquero**
Eileen T. Haw**
Noel L. Maximo**
Luzviminda G. Lee**
Marieta N. Larcena*
Rosalina M. Ordiales*

Eucalyptus NBO
Marita B. Abellera****
Carmelita S. Chua**
Diane D. Perfecto**
Robert Yeo**
Edgard V. Briones,**
Geraldo B. Punsal*

Mulawin NBO
Corazon S. De Mesa****
Yolanda M. Legaspi***
Josephine G. Pamintuan***
Amelita V. Reyes***
Ma. Paz Emilia B. Tubelleja**
Angelita R. Legaspi**
Jose R. Salanguit**
John Randell R. Tiongson**
Ramil H. Gandola**
Teresita S. Miralles*
Vivian D. Asuncion*
Pamela Ivy S. De Mesa*
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Visitacion Lilia C. Chang****
Gloria M. Kaw***
Annie D. Yu***
Alexander T. Uy**
Ester S. Chan**
Marilyn Y. Tan**
Roweña Joy C. Tanlimco**
Jocelyn C. Lim**
Linda T. Chua**
Jasmine V. Saw**
Zeddy L. Ang**
Estrellita T. Nua*
Evelyn L. Monzon*
Jocelyn Y. Ubalde*
Aurora P. Chua*

Redwood NBO
Mary T. Chan****
Teresita F. Nery**
Christine Chan Lee**
Aida C. Deveza**
Marilou C. Tan*
Judy M. Ong*

Tindalo NBO
Fredezwinda T. Gonzales****
Lilibeth N. Quintos**
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Crame to host arnis

ARNIS Philippines Inc. (ARPI), a National Sports Association affiliated with the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), will hold the National Arnis Tournament 2000 on Dec. 15-16 at the Camp Crame Gymnasium in Quezon City.

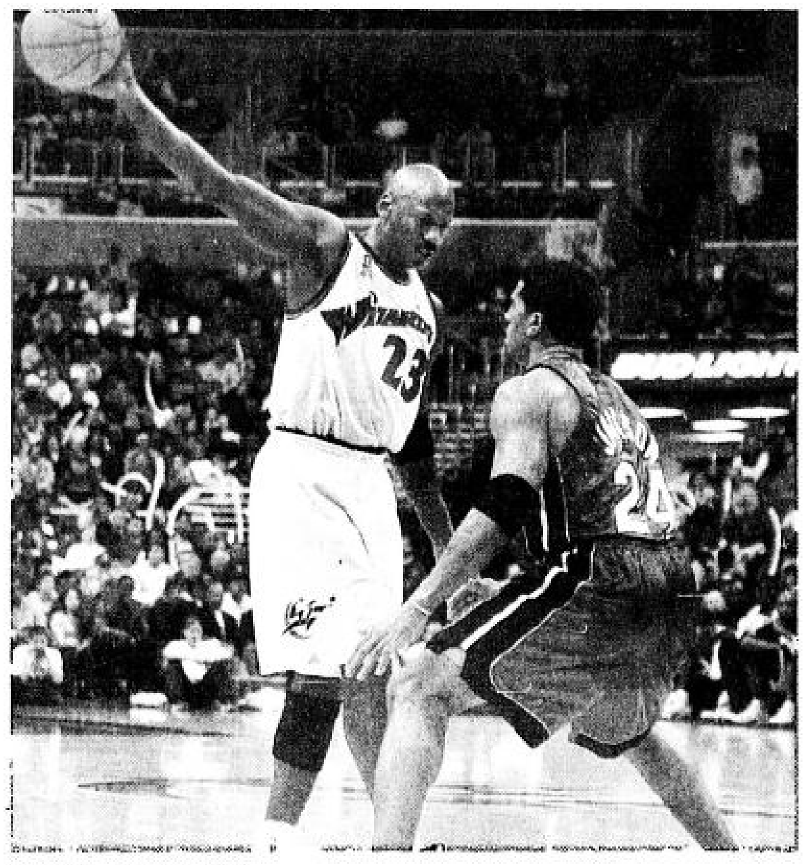
The country's top arnisadores are set to compete in 14 sport/sparring divisions. Also lined-up is a junior anyo competition where delegates will perform creative team anyo and kata.

The organizing committee is headed by ARPI president Raymond S. Velayo, tournament director Cecille Tubera and deputy tourney director Raffy Montalbo.

Call 725-4859 or 724-2358 through secretary-general Jonjon Lota and board treasurer Dewey Sahagun for details.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Swift beat Seven-Up, 119-106, to sweep the PBA Third Conference title series at the Ultra. Also today in 1997, Paeng Nepomuceno defeated American Tom Laskow 496 to 427 in an exhibition match in Guadalajara, Mexico.



KING JORDAN
The Wizards' Michael Jordan (left) keeps the ball away from the Heat's Jim Jackson yesterday in the second half at MCI Arena in Washington, D.C. The Wizards won, 82-80. **Other NBA results:** Spurs 108, Raptors 95; Suns 114, Kings 88; Timberwolves 98, Jazz 87; Clippers 114, SuperSonics 94. AFP

Woods seeks season-capping win

THOUSAND OAKS, California—The 3.8 million-dollar Williams World Challenge set to start today boasts 18 of the world's top golfers, but for world number one Tiger Woods, the post-season event is more like coming home for the holidays. "This is how it used to be playing in junior golf," said Woods, who will be 26 on December 30. "You would have mom and pop following you and your friends following you, and that to me is pretty cool." *AFP*

Barred players hit Philta arm-twisting

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE COUNTRY'S top men's tennis players cried foul yesterday after the Philippine Tennis Association barred them from joining the newly revived Men's Professional Tennis Council of the Philippines, which will put them directly under the Games and Amusements Board.

Joseph Victorino, Adelo Abadia and Michael Mora said they were discouraged by Philta president Buddy Andrada and national coach Johnny Jose to push through with their MPTCP induction set this month.

Philta sources said Andrada confronted the three players after practice and told them not to join such group because it would "professionalize" their status and thus put them under GAB's rule. Abadia is the incoming president of the MPTCP.

MPTCP, which was started by 1980s tennis stars Nilo Natividad, Manny Tolentino, Roland So, Rod Rafael, Raymond Suarez and Danilo Pila, is an association among the country's Top 16 in men's tennis and is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

MPTCP's founding members, who refused to be named, said that while each group member is a professional, it doesn't stop its members from representing the Philippines in international competition.

"They should not be afraid because we are ready once the country calls for our service," said one of the group's incorporators. "And they also should not be afraid of GAB if they are not doing anything wrong."

Andrada can't be reached for comment.

Without a formal induction, the new set of officers can't push through with their projects and can't ask for help from corporate sponsors because big companies want representations from the group.

Hanging in the balance is MPTCP's ambitious P1.5 million Tennis Tour 2002, which will have four legs each in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and a Masters extravaganza in December 2002.

MPTCP has been mothballed for several years but was recently revived to give junior players something to prepare for once their age-group career is over. Without a high-level program, players with budding careers end up abruptly due to lack of sponsorships.

Southwoods Chairman's Cup today

MORE than 300 members, sponsors and guests will tee off tomorrow (Dec. 15) for the eighth edition of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club Chairman's Cup tournament at the Masters and Legends courses.

The field will tee off in two shotgun batches with those playing at the Legends getting off at 10 a.m. and the Masters at 10:30 a.m.

A Mitsubishi GSR donated by Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Inc. and dressed up by Diamond Motors will be at stake as the main hole-in-one prize. It will be raffled off during the awarding ceremonies if nobody scores an ace.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, Senator Tito Sotto and ambassadors of different countries are among the special guests who will also join Robert John Sobrepeña, in whose honor the event is being held, the opening ceremonials at 9:30 a.m. at the newly renovated driving range of the club.

Freddie Mendoza, chair of the sports and games committee of MSGCC, said that more than P300,000 worth of raffle prizes will be given away including a 29-inch colored television set and so many merchandise prizes.

The sponsorship roster includes Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Inc., Diamond Motors, College Assurance Plan, Smart, Golforce, Nestle, Multi Global, Federal Management and Maintenance Inc., Recio+Casas, Pilipinas Shell, Romago, Sumimoto, Wilson, SGV, MRT, Mutual Reliance, RR Payumo, Camp John Hay Dev't. Co. Alexander Forbes, Cork, Rebtrade, Camp John Hay Manor and Manila Southwoods Manor.

Araneta to stage NCA's fund raising derby Monday

A ONE-DAY fund-raising five-cock derby will be staged on Monday, Dec. 17, under the auspices of the prestigious National Cockers Association at the Araneta Coliseum.

It will feature the very best fighting cocks of the country's foremost cocker-breeders,

The elite field will be headed by last Wednesday's NCA 7-Cock Derby season-opening, co-champions R&B Farm I of Rep. Claude Bautista.

Bautista is the newest NCA Central Council member, who teamed up with circuit veteran Boy Boy Roa and PE San Pablo Heat R&B of Pol Estrellado.

The joint winners scored six stirring wins, ahead of five-pointers Winning Time-DVH of lawyer Rudy Salud, another new NCA council member and Lito Orillaza and RT 114 Mapalad II of brothers Alex and Gerry Escalona.

For this Monday's pre-Christmas presentation, playing stellar roles are selected battle birds from the farms of Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Ambassador Danding Cojuangco, the unsinkable James Chiongbian, three-time Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, back-to-back Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, Pampanga's champion cockers Jun and Rudy Jingco, the Madlambayan brothers and the other NCA council members such as Gerry Fevidal, engineer Pacifico Berin, Louie Cua and Philip Chiongbian.

Don't ignore Clark toxic waste issue

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I WONDER why the important toxic waste issue at Clark Field was not discussed during last Wednesday's weekly PSA Forum at the Holiday Inn. Instead what I read in the papers the following day were the self-serving statements of Pampanga board member Yeng Guiao and Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella, who explained the merits of their respective bids to host the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Said Yeng Guiao: "Bacolod may spend less to host the SEA Games and Pampanga may spend more, but our bid is not limited to 2005 because we plan to build a national sports complex (inside the vast Clark Special Economic Zone) that we can be proud of." Guiao, son of the late Gov. Bren Guiao, said he would need at least P3 billion for the ambitious project, stressing that the mammoth budget would actually mean less for the government if we build a new sports complex now than build one years after hosting the SEA Games.

On the other hand, Bacolod, according to Puentevella, would need only at least P2 billion since most of the venues are already in place together the facilities in nearby Iloilo City, which could also be harnessed as the site of the other SEAG events. A former commissioner of the Philippine Sports Commission, Puentevella explained that the country is facing difficult times and that we must not spend so much in hosting the SEA Games. "Besides, it's high time the government give the South the chance to host such a big sporting event."

"We are looking into the long-term use of the sports complex beyond 2005," said Guiao. "Eventually, we will have to replace the 67-year-old Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila and build a new one where our athletes can train safe and away from the distractions in the metropolis. The Rizal Memorial Sports Complex is no longer a conducive place to train the national athletes."

But despite his good intentions, Guiao is still ill-advised to pursue the plan to build a sports complex at Clark because of confirmed reports about the presence of toxic waste in the former American military base. As a matter of fact, there have been at least 80 deaths resulting from drinking contaminated water at the Clark evacuation area where 20,000 families were evacuated after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991.

Recently, Prof. Giovanni Tapang of the alliance Up Against Toxics! said toxic contamination at Clark might be worse than previously known, citing findings which identified 14 contaminated sites at the military air base. He claimed that American soldiers who conducted recently military exercises at Clark used only bottled water not only for drinking but for bathing as well, buttressing reports about the presence of toxic contamination there.

The country's sports leaders should forget right now their plan to construct a sports complex at Clark for the sake of the athletes who would be exposing themselves to the deadly toxic waste once they start training there. I say this in advance for the simple reason that when a problem is sensed early it can easily be solved; however, if one ignores it, any solution will be too late because the problem will have become incurable.

Pasay cockfest today

A CASH prize of P300,000 awaits the winners of Pasay City Cockpit's 4-cock derby at 7 tonight. More than 60 fights are on tap for aficionados.

Derby host Daday Siochi, an active bigtime cocker from Malabon, has invited his fellow derbyists from Del Monte, Valenzuela Cockpit and Sports Arena, Caloocan Cockpit, Sta. Quiteria, Ana Rose Cockpit, Matadero and Dampalit All-Stars Cockpit.

To provide the challenge are regular cockers from Pasay, Parañaque, Makati and San Juan.

Meanwhile, the much-awatied "Pasko Na sa Pasay 4-Cock Derby" to be hosted by PCC pit manager Eric dela Rosa, is set on Dec. 21. Entry fee is P8,800 while guaranteed prize is P500,000.

Submission of weights is strictly one day before derby (Dec. 20), from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Call 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746 for details.

7-Up nips Mountain Dew Yellow

7-UP Green beat Mountain Dew Yellow Gold in the semifinals, 8-7, in the 2nd season of Pepel Cup "In-Line Roller Hockey" recently to reach the "best of three" championship series.

It will face Mountain Dew Yellow Gold on Saturday, Dec. 15, at GameworX fourth level of Festival Supermall Filinvest Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The Greeners leaned on JR Torlo to beat arch-rival Yellow Goal.

"This is really a very exciting championship series," said marketing manager Christian Datol.

Meanwhile, Mirinda Orange defeated Pepsi, 8-7 score. Both will meet on Saturday for third place.

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FEDEX-TANDUAY DEAL

PBA awaits board decision

BY JUNE NAVARRO

LEFT out of the negotiations on the sale of Tanduay's franchise to FedEx, the Philippine Basketball Association said it would rather wait for the decision of the league's Board of Governors than air its side on the controversial P100-million deal.

PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino yesterday said the deal must have the blessings of the Board of Governors before the league could legitimize its transfer.

"Whatever it is, any transfer will have to undergo through the PBA Board's approval," said Bernardino.

He added, however, that the term sheet of the deal has yet to be submitted to the Commissioner's Office. The said deal is also excluded in the agenda of the board's general meeting on Tuesday.

"Until the papers are submitted to us, we can't include the Tanduay-FedEx deal on the agenda," Bernardino said.

Last Wednesday, Tanduay reporteldy sold its PBA franchise to FedEx, owner of the Laguna Lakers in the MBA, for a little over P100 million.

Talks of its sale, however, are as rife as a week ago after Tanduay gave up main man Eric Menk to Barangay Ginebra and sharp-shooter Dondon Hontiveros to San Miguel Beer.

The terms and details of the sale would be presented to the PBA Board on Tuesday where the transfer of Pop Cola's franchise from RFM to San Miguel Corporation stands out as the main issue.

Under the agreement, FedEx should honor the existing contracts of players and coaching staff although sources said FedEx would rather acquire fresh faces on its squad.

Derrick Pumaren, Tanduay's head coach prior to its purchase, said he is open to negotiations with FedEx officials but has yet to receive confirmation on the sale.

Although reports have it that the PBA Board's acceptance of FedEx as the newest member of the league is almost a done deal, PBA insiders said FedEx would walk the tightrope before getting the affirmation of the board.

Spring Oil prevails

SPRING Cooking Oil turned to Rene Alforque and Rodel Manuel in the final quarter to beat Cho Pat, 81-69, yesterday in the National Basketball League (NBL) Presidential Cup at the UM gym.

The inside plays of Alforque and Manuel triggered a 10-2 run which eventually had the Oil Makers pulling away by 16 points, 78-62, with 3:18 remaining.

The Oil Makers finished the elimination round with a 4-4 win-loss record and avoided a crossover semifinals showdown with topnotcher RP-FedEx National Men's team.

The Oil Makers, who are owned by multi-titled national shooter Tac Padilla clash at 5:30 p.m. with Wang's Ball Club.

Archers, Blu win

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc-Archers outgunned Montaña Jewels, 86-76, while Blu Detergent repeated over Ateneo-Pioneer, 74-58, in a pair of lopsided matches yesterday in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

The Archers drew big games from Mike Cortez, BJ Manalo, Nerbert Omolon and James Yap for their sixth win against two losses, good enough for the solo lead.

Blu tied sister team Shark Energy Drink in second place with a 6-3 card.

Ateneo-Pioneer dropped to 4-5, same record of Kutitap Toothpaste. *Dennis Eroa*

BLU 74—Legaspi 13, Bacani 12, Codamon 12, Roldan 10, Sanz 8, Epondulan 5, De la Cuesta 4, Billones 4, Prior 3, Kalaw 2, Calo 1, Quiambao 0, Santos 0.

ATENEO-PIONEER 58—Avenido 12, Membrere 9, Ferrer 7, Fonacier 7, De la Rosa 5, Bugia 4, Chia 4, Alvarez 4, Noble 4, Villanueva 2, Cruz 0, Victoria 0, Sison 0.

Quarters: 20-11, 46-36, 55-42, 74-58.

Jr. golf on today

SEN. Tito Sotto, former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos and MMDA chair Ben Abalos will hit the ceremonial balls in today's launching tournament of The Golf Authority Junior Golfers Club at the Wack Wack west course.

Joining the government luminaries in the opening ceremonials are Alvee Benitez of chief backer Bingo Bonanza and reigning Philippine Open champion Gerald Rosales who will also represent TGA.

La Salle booters book semis berth

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—La Salle Academy blanked Surigao Norte National High, 3-0, Wednesday to clinch the first semifinal slot in the Mindanao Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football finals at the Antonio Acharon Sports Center here.

In the other game, Davao champion Rizal Memorial Colleges banked on the heroics of National Youth team aspirant Jason Mortillero to nip Zamboanga Norte National High, 2-1, and move within a win of gaining another semis berth.

Mortillero, 15-year-old RMC sophomore, broke the ice in the 13th minute with a penalty kick following Zambo Norte's handball violation.

The Zambo booters tied the count in the 61st on Ian Bas' 12-yard shot. But in the 92nd and on injury time, Mortillero eluded two of his defenders and sent the ball flying over the head of Zambo Norte goalie Efren Montilla for the winning marker.

Glenn Banolirao and Sean Gepaya led La Salle Academy's offensive, scoring the Iligan booters' three goals.

The champion and runner-up in the tourney will advance to the national finals set Jan. 29 to Feb. 3, next year in Iloilo City.

Goosen, Campbell to join JW Classic

US Open champion Retief Goosen and Michael Campbell of New Zealand will play in the $1 million Johnny Walker Classic Jan. 24-27 at the Lake Karrinyup Country Club in Perth, Australia.

Goosen's stirring triumph in the US Open in June sparked a string of victories for the talented shotmaker who also won the Scottish Open, the Madrid Open and the recent World Cup in Japan in tandem with Ernie Els.

Those feats shoved Goosen to No. 12 in the world rankings.

Campbell, a former Australian PGA Tour Order of Merit leader, beat the likes of Tiger Woods and Els in the 1999 Johnnie Walker Classic in Taiwan. He also won the Heineken Classic this year and finished 12th in the European OOM derby.

"This year's Johnnie Walker Classic keeps going from strength to strength and is fast shaping up to be a fantastic event. To add Retief (Goosen) and Michael (Campbell) to the field really rounds it off," said Stephen Morley, global brand director of Johnnie Walker.

Kenneth 2nd in 'moto' tilt

KENNETH "Wonder Boy" San Andres of the Caltex Revtex Motocross Team made the country proud by finishing second overall in Little Stars 65-cc category of the five-leg 2001 Finals of the Asian Supercross Championships held in the Thailand International Motocross Track recently.

San Andres bested 18 other participants using his 65-cc Kawasaki bike in the five laps of the international motocross race participated in by representatives from Asia-Pacific countries.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA
BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Gidget 2. Snake King
Race 2—1. Bulwak 2. Pride of Mandaue 3. Talk to Patsy
Race 3—1. Pacific Dancer 2. Brilliant Leader 3. Aringkingking
Race 4—1. Island King 2. Top Jay 3. Speed Empire 4. Mine Alone
Race 5—1. Raise A Fire 2. Boy from Brazil 3. Above All/Top Secret 4. Woman's Task
Race 6—1. Silver Print/Big Treasure 2. You and Me 3. Profit Margin 4. Snake Dancer 5. Pretty Pleasing
Race 7—1. Love Song 2. Pistol Red 3. Miss Sleween 4. Full Show
Race 8—1. Poblacion 2. Timber Nectar 3. Super Regent 4. Come N Go 5. CJ's Pride

La Salle trips UP netters, 2-1

DE LA Salle downed University of the Philippines, 2-1, last Wednesday to remain unbeaten in three games in the UAAP men's tennis tournament at the Valle Verde Country Club outdoor courts.

The Roland Kraut-mentored Green Netters banked on Pop Sabandon's 7-5, 6-0 victory over Gian Carlo Remigio in the first singles and Joseph Nicholas Faller and Johan Guba's 6-1, 6-1 conquest of Nathaniel Guadayo and Marco Palanca in the doubles. UP's Karlo Inigo won the second singles over Donn Riego de Dios, 3-6, 6-0, 7-5.

In other matches, Ateneo de Manila routed Adamson, 3-0, and University of Santo Tomas beat University of the East, 2-1, to share second place with 2-1.

In the distaff side, UP notched its first win at the expense of La Salle, 2-1.

Anna Patricia Santos trounced Sommer Bisagas, 7-5, 6-3, in the first singles but La Salle fought back to tie the score after Cristina Gomez and Janet Jill Uy won the doubles over Stephanie Lapez and Marie Therese Adato, 7-5, 6-3.

Jay-Ann Dizon handed the victory to UP following a 6-2, 7-5 win over Liza Buenbrazo in the second singles.

Bong angry again?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

PYTHAGORAS, one of my all time heroes, has said: "Anger always begins with folly, and ends with repentance."

Was Bong Tan angry when he thought about the idea of selling the PBA Tanduay franchise to FedEx? Did he really do it?

Hard to imagine he did it.

But knowing Bong Tan's temper, he might have done it.

Remember his infamous outbursts in the not-so-distant past?

After unsuccessfully bringing a case to court against the PBA over a messy championship playoff issue, he next called the PBA "the San Miguel show." He said he was misquoted. And I believed him. "I can not do that to San Miguel," he said then. "We do business with them."

Then he tried to snatch Danny Ildefonso from San Miguel. Dangling an offer sheet that virtually secured a kingly life for Ildefonso after retirement, Bong Tan was instead pilloried and not praised. Eventually, SMB retained Ildefonso.

And now this. Bong Tan wants out of the PBA.

But if true, is it good for Tanduay? I mean, is it really wise for Tanduay to give it up? Reportedly, FedEx is buying the Tanduay franchise for not less than P100 million.

That's a lot of money. Even in three lifetimes, it's almost impossible for me to be able to own that much.

But does Bong Tan need the money? Or has the PBA become unpalatable to him?

If he's just angry, he might end up repenting in the end.

■

Fernando Poe Jr.'s days are numbered. The PBA will soon be "King of the Movies" when PBA games get to be shown in public plazas in far-flung places where the magic of TV is absent.

"We will rerun PBA games for the benefit of the masses," said Rey Gamboa, the former PBA chair. "Instead of showing films by FPJ and the like, we will soon replace them with PBA games to be shown in public plazas. Also for free."

What an innovation, indeed. Bravo!

■

I'm going to that well-maintained Orchard in Dasmariñas, Cavite, today to play in the PBA versus Media Tournament, an event that I really admire for its sheer drama and thrill. It is here that I used to play in the same flight with PBA founding father Leo Prieto and Tito Eduque. Sad to say Leo does not play golf anymore. Tito has gone to the Great Beyond.

Today's tournament will finally determine who will be the best golfer for the year among sportswriters. Sadly again, I'm out of it. I missed many monthly tournaments—for one reason or another.

Anyway, what matters is the company that I am with each time I play golf. PBA guys are always fun to be with.

TENNIS CHAMPS

Winners of Club 71 pose after winning trophies in the recent 8th Philippine Ladies Tennis League Tournament at the Manila Polo Club. From left are DJ Suarez (head coach), Tess Acuzar, Belen Lim (assistant coach), Debbie Lee Yue, Roşely Cua, Via Yuquimpo, Chonie David, Carol Li, Ambec Macapagal and Rose Neri.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SPORTS
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor **EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA**, Assistant Editor

Nat'l chessfest Dec. 19-21

THE NATIONAL Chess Federation of the Philippines is still accepting entries for the NCFP Pamaskong Handog 2001 National Open Active Chess Team Championship to be held on Dec. 19-21 at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. Organized and supported by the NCFP board of directors headed by chair/president lawyer Matius V. Defensor, the event is open to all chess teams.

SMB, SLR TIED AT 2-2

Crucial Game 5 tonight

BY JUNE NAVARRO

GAME TODAY (Araneta Coliseum)
7 p.m.—San Miguel vs Sta. Lucia

Game 1—Sta. Lucia d. SMB, 86-80
Game 2—SMB d. Sta. Lucia, 86-78
Game 3—Sta. Lucia d. SMB, 83-74
Game 4—SMB d. Sta. Lucia, 106-73

DEFENDING champion San Miguel Beer aims to employ the same battle plan against Sta. Lucia Realty when it bids for a 3-2 edge in the PBA Governors Cup Finals tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

Reaping tremendous success from their outside shooting, the Beermen routed the Realtors, 106-73, Wednesday night to equalize the playing field at two games apiece and reduce the series to a best-of-three affair.

"As long as we make our shots, they (Realtors) won't be able to run," said SMB coach Jong Uichico. "But if we shoot poorly, Game 5 would be similar with the first three games."

In Games 1 and 3 where they lost to the Realtors, the Beermen shot miserably from the floor, performing way below the 50-percent mark in field goal shooting.

In Game 2, the Beermen won, 86-78, but cut loose only in the waning moments through the inside plays of Lamont Strothers and Danny Seigle.

On Wednesday, however, fortunes drastically changed for the Beermen as they sank 15 of their 28 attempts from the three-point arc.

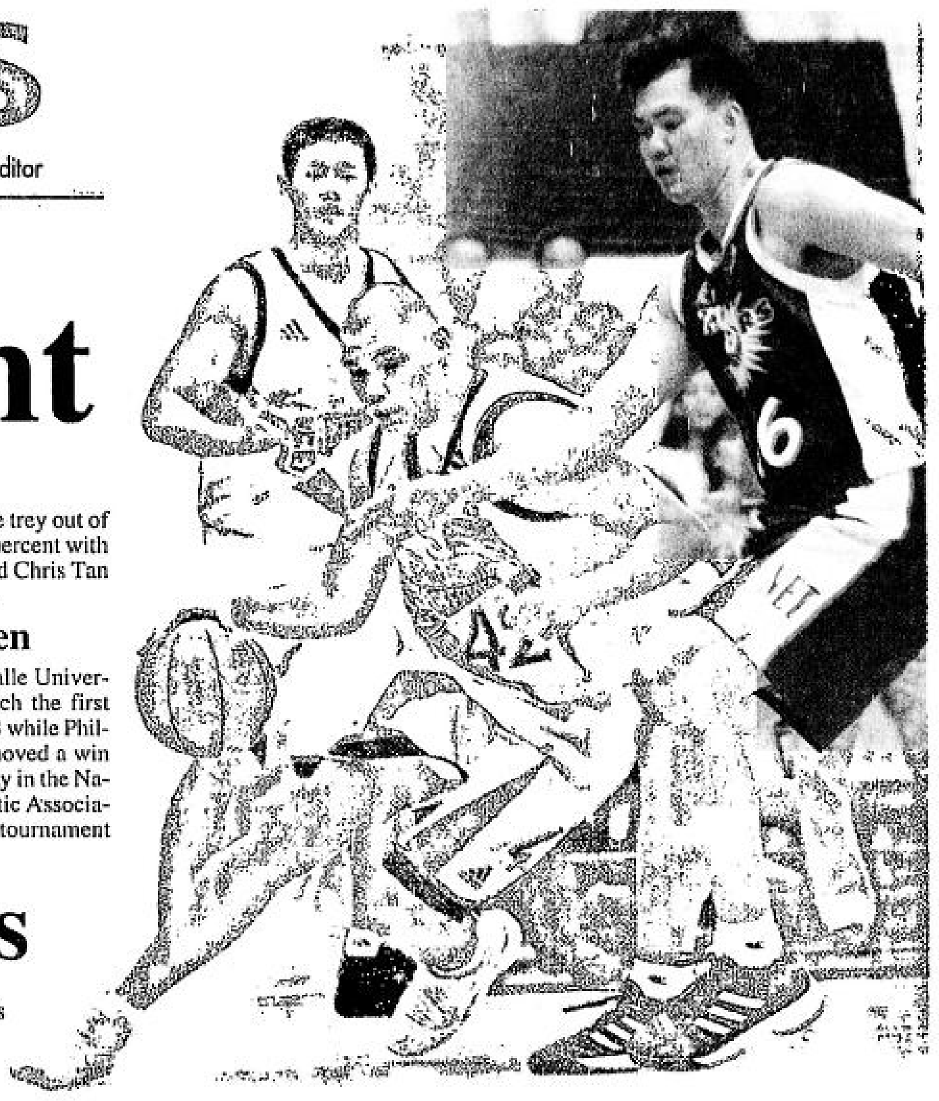
For that, San Miguel Beer set an all-time high for the number of triples made in a championship game.

Out of their 67 attempts from the field, the Realtors converted only 28 for a 42-percent clip.

They also made only one trey out of 15 tries for a measly seven percent with shooters Paolo Mendoza and Chris Tan going scoreless throughout.

Lyceum unbeaten

LYCEUM nipped De La Salle University-Manila, 77-75, to snatch the first quarterfinals seat in Group B while Philippine Maritime Institute moved a win shy of getting there yesterday in the National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) basketball tournament at the PMI gym.



DANNY Seigle (with ball) of San Miguel Beer tries to outmaneuver Dennis Espino (No. 6) of Sta. Lucia as SMB's Danny Ildefonso looks in Game 4 of the PBA Finals Wednesday at Philsports. San Miguel won, 106-73, to level the series at 2-2.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Batangas aims for 2-0 lead vs Negros

GAME TODAY
(San Andres Gym, Manila)
5 p.m.—LBC Batangas vs Negros

BY ROY LUARCA

THE LBC Batangas Blades barely salvaged victory over the Negros Slashers Wednesday night. Coach Nash Racela knows that and he isn't pleased.

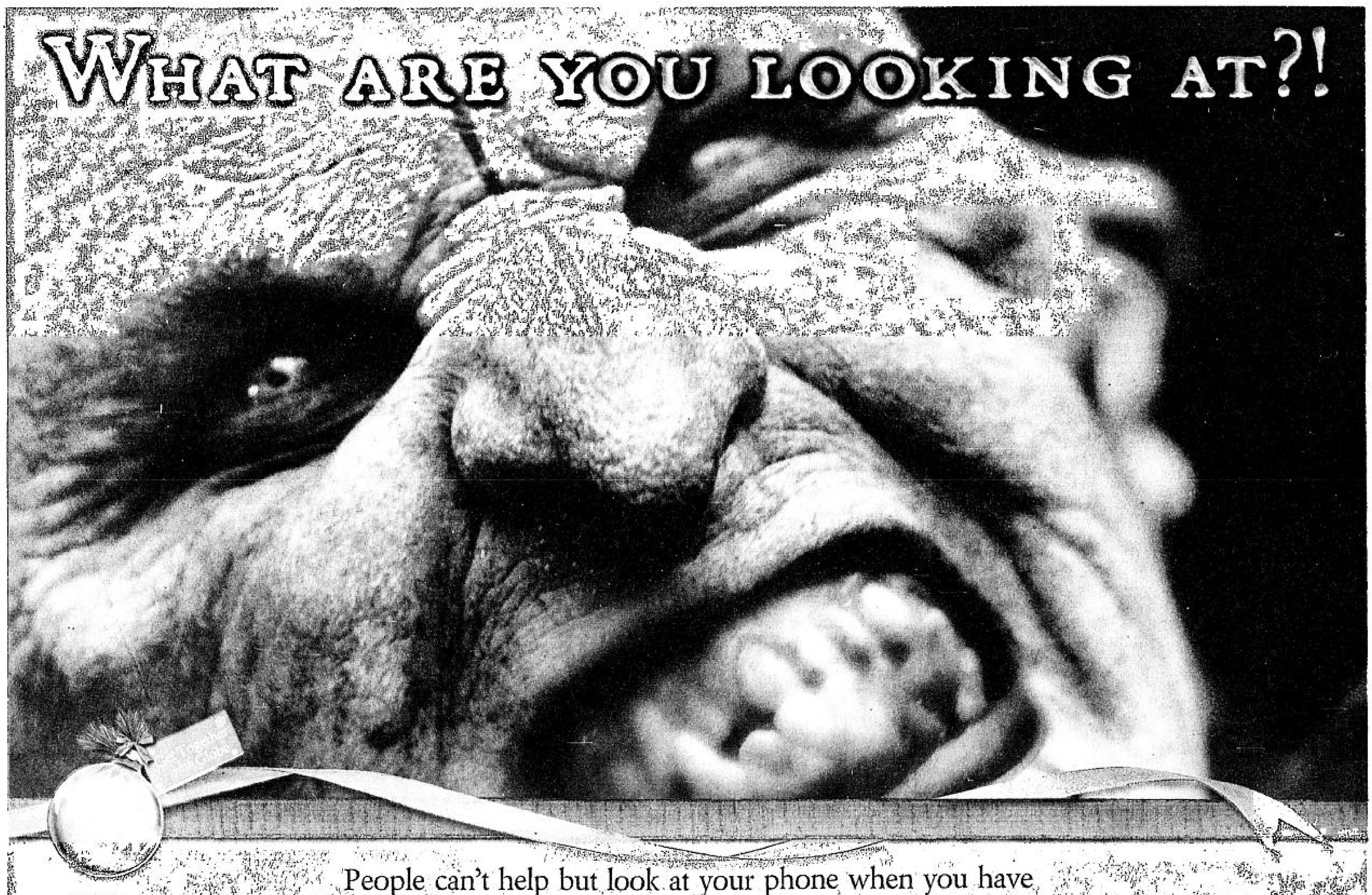
He wants the Blades to have the killer instinct when they tackle the Slashers at 5 p.m. today in Game Two of their MBA National Finals at the San Andres Gym in Manila.

The Blades blew a 23-point lead and had to bank on the heroics of Eddie Laure and Tonyboy Espinosa in the last six minutes to repulse the Slashers at the St. La Salle Lipa Sentrum in the opener of their best-of-five series on Wednesday.

The scrambling victory, however, worries Blades coach Nash Racela.

"They (Blades) have the tendency to relax and we can't afford to do that against the Slashers in the succeeding Games," said Racela, who is also concerned with the transfer of the venue.

Racela noted that they'd be missing the throngs of Batangueños and in effect the homecourt advantage in Game Two.



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Lovers behind murder meet again in QC court

By Agnes E. Donato

THE LOVERS whose passion allegedly caused the murder last year of government corporate counsel Jun Valerio, yesterday found themselves reunited in a Quezon City court.

The reunion however was not in any way sweet, with both parties not even exchanging a glance.

Principal suspect SPO1 Antonio Cabador, who confessed to hiring a gunman to kill Valerio on the command of his wife, Ma. Milagros, was brought yesterday to the court with an amputated leg and one arm in a cast.

"I looked at her, but she did not look back," said Cabador when he saw Ma. Milagros, whom he had not seen since last year.

After more than a year in hiding, Cabador was cornered by operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation while he was having lunch in his hideout in Tangub City, Misamis Occidental on Nov. 9.

"I was so surprised when I saw armed men surrounding my house," Cabador said. "I grabbed my .45 pistol and shot at them."

The NBI men fired back and hit Cabador several times in the right arm and left leg, causing him severe injuries.

Cabador, who was hauled to court in a wheelchair, was ordered to be sent immediately to the Quezon City Jail by Judge Ma. Theresa Dela Torre-Yadao.

But he pleaded not to be imprisoned just yet, saying his situation was "still delicate." On Wednesday afternoon, he arrived from Cagayan de Oro where he underwent treatment.

"I'm not evading imprisonment," he said. "It's just that I'm still in pain right now. I can't even eat, get up or attend to my personal necessities by myself."

Cabador, a former member of the PNP Police Security and Protection Office, said he served as the personal guard of a son of Justice Valerio in 1998.

"Justice Valerio got me to protect his son because the boy was then receiving threats from fraternity men in his university," he said. "But later on, Ma. Milagros started asking me to take her to UP Manila where she worked."

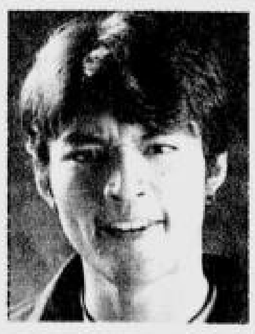
He and Valerio's wife soon had a relationship, after Ma. Milagros related to him that the justice had not slept with her since she had their last baby years ago.

Cabador added Ma. Milagros paid for the construction of his two resthouses

LOVERS BEHIND/ A26

Daboy's son in trouble for lewd behavior

By Alcuin Papa


FERNANDEZ

ACTOR Mark Anthony Fernandez is in trouble again, this time for alleged acts of lasciviousness.

The son of movie star Rudy Fernandez, who had undergone drug rehabilitation, is the subject of a complaint filed by a 24-year-old female medical representative.

Fernandez allegedly figured in a lewd incident inside a plush bar located on Jupiter Street in Bel-Air Village, Makati City shortly after midnight yesterday.

Complainant Ana Asido, single, of Pinetree Street, Pinesville Lawa, Meycauayan, Bulacan, claimed she was at the Detour Sports Bar at

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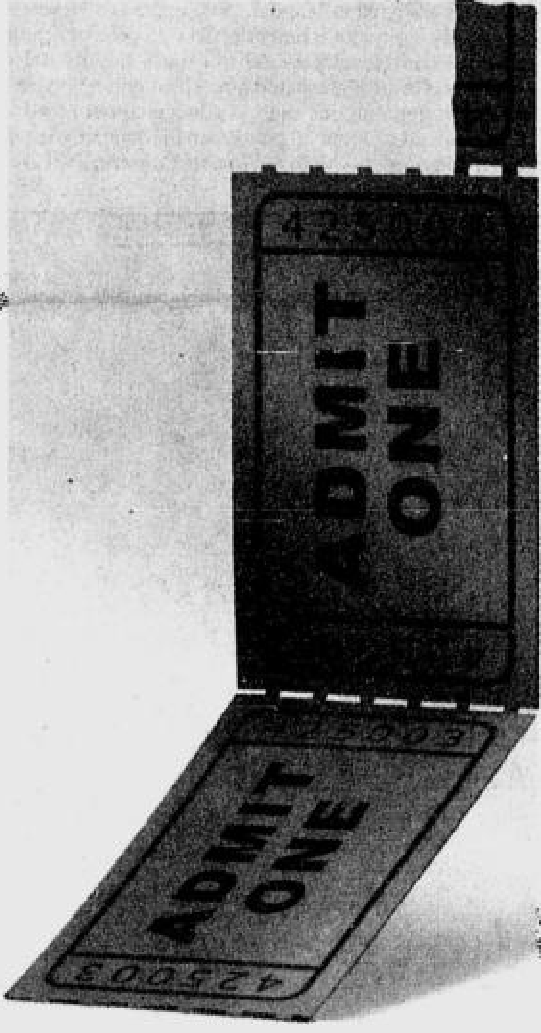

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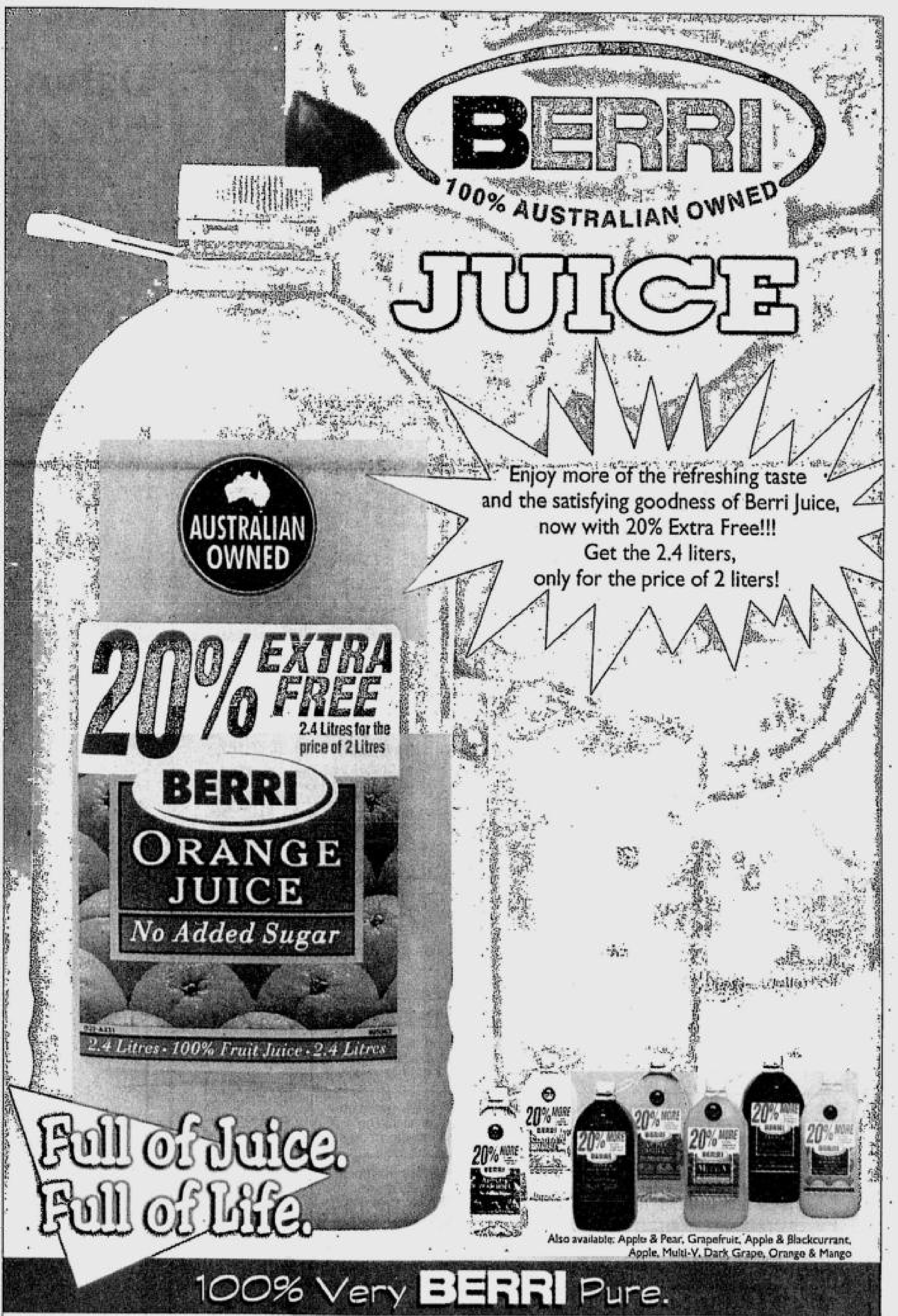
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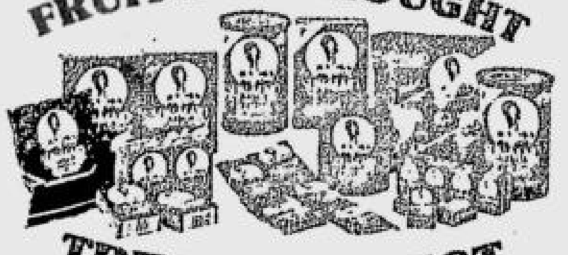

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920 'illegal' cops to stay

By Alcuin Papa and Agnes E. Donato

IT LOOKS like Metro Manila will be saddled with 920 police recruits whose backgrounds were not thoroughly checked after the National Capital Regional Police Office decided to go on with their training and deployment.

Supt. Julius Abanes, NCRPO spokesperson, said they will continue with the six-month long training of the recruits in Cavite and, upon completion, will deploy them to the five police districts of Metro Manila.

NCRPO chief Director Edgardo Aglipay also clarified yesterday that Napolcom returned the list of 920 new recruits to the NCRPO because of the "wrong use of terminology" in the applications.

Aglipay said commission officials sent back the applications because it wanted to issue a "confirmation" of the appointments and not sign a "recommendation" for the rookies. Aglipay stressed the appointment papers of the recruits were all in order.

Interior Secretary Joey Lina reportedly castigated Napolcom's Personnel and Administrative Director Bernardo Calibo after he learned of the issue through media.

According to the Constitution, the Napolcom has administrative control over the Philippine National Police.

In a phone interview, Aglipay said the assignment of the 920 new policemen was not illegal.

He explained the NCRPO made the mistake of using "recommendation for appointment" in its communication to the Napolcom, when it should have written "recommendation for the confirmation of appointment."

"The Napolcom's job is to confirm the appointment of new policemen, not to appoint them because they have already taken their oath," the police chief said.

Aglipay also said that, contrary to an earlier report, the new recruits had taken their civil service and Napolcom examinations, and had submitted the required college diploma.

The Napolcom earlier said the applications of the recruits and their subsequent oath-taking on Dec. 1 is void since the commission did not have a chance to scrutinize their records as required.

The Napolcom's Regional Director for the National Capital Region, lawyer Emilio Salumbides, sent back the endorsement of the 920 recruits "without action" since the agency was not able to go through the records of the recruits.

The Napolcom conducts background check on potential recruits, checking for any criminal records.

Chua's pa suing pa of slay suspect

THE FATHER of slain University of Santo Tomas cadet Mark Chua is set to file a complaint against the father of another cadet implicated in his son's brutal murder.

Welson Chua yesterday said that Senior Supt. Ruel Manangbao, Cabanatuan police chief, violated the Philippine National Police code of ethics when he allowed his son, Michael Von, to escape to the United States two months ago.

The older Chua is set to meet with PNP chief Leandro Mendoza to discuss his complaint and ask how authorities could immediately extradite the younger Manangbao to the Philippines.

Michael Von is one of six UST cadet officers who allegedly abducted and killed Chua inside the UST Reserve Officers Training Corps office last March.

In a recent meeting with Deputy Director Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane, Manangbao promised "not to stand in the way of justice" and assured that he would make his son available in the court proceedings, Welson said.

Christian V. Esguerra

Due to space constraints, Recah Trinidad's column on military atrocities in Southern Luzon will see print on Monday

Lovers behind . . . (From page A25)

in Muntinlupa City and in Bacoor, Cavite, and gave him a Mitsubishi Lancer.

"I had no idea she would ask for something in return," he said. "That's why I was so surprised when she approached and told me to hire a gunman to kill the justice."

"If you do your job well, I will work for the annulment of your marriage and we'll wed," he quoted Ma. Milagros as promising him.

Cabador said he hired Martin Jimenez, who was his neighbor in Bacoor, to kill Valerio. Jimenez's nephew, Samuel Baran, served as lookout.

Justice Valerio was shot several times in front of his residence on Mapangakit Street, Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City at 12:30 a.m. on March 18, 2000.

He died at the St. Luke's Medical Center.

Ma. Milagros roused the suspicion of the police and Valerio's family when she went to Davao City immediately after her husband's funeral.

Cabador went in hiding after Baran and Jimenez admitted to police their involvement in the crime.

Darker holidays for blind workers

By Philip C. Tubeza

SEVERAL blind apprentices working for Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) livelihood projects in Barangay Escopa, Manila will have a bleak Christmas after their salaries were stolen.

Robbers broke into the DSWD National Capital Region office in Legarda, Manila and took away the blind persons' salaries worth P100,000. Worse, police believe the heist was an inside job.

The unidentified suspects were able to enter the cash section office at the NCR office's second floor after office hours but there were no signs of forcible entry, said investigator PO3 Gordius Alundro, of the Western Police District-Theft and Robbery Section.

Even the steel vault that contained the money was not damaged, Alundro said.

Police have taken the sworn statements of three DSWD employees, including Alicia M. Pagaduan, allegedly the only person who knew the vault's combination, Alundro added.

He said the incident happened between 7 p.m. Wednesday and 5:45 a.m. yesterday. There was no security guard on the second floor since it was his day off.

Alundro said the lock of the cash section's main door was removed but there was no other sign of forcible entry.

The suspects apparently also had the keys to the two doors they had to pass through to get to the room where the vault was. Alundro said there was another vault in the room, but it was not opened. The suspects apparently knew that it had no money.

METROBRIEFS

Fire

AT least 20 San Juan City families lost their homes after fire razed a slum community yesterday morning. No one was reported injured in the two-hour blaze, which started about 1:58 a.m. in a squatters colony at the corner of Road 1 and 3rd West Crame, Barangay West Crame, police said. Arson investigators were trying to determine the cause of the blaze. *Nelson F. Flores*

Rape

A LAUNDRY woman accused the colleague of her husband of raping her in a rubber boat off Manila Bay on Wednesday. The alleged rapist, identified only as Jerry, eluded arrest. Police said the woman did laundry for workers and clients of the Manila Yacht Club, where both her husband and the suspect worked. She told police she was looking for her husband, who at that time was in the bay area. She said the suspect offered her a ride on a rubber boat to meet her husband, but he changed course and raped her instead, the woman told police. *Philip C. Tubeza*

Surrender

DISMISSED Mandaluyong City policeman PO1 Francisco Castillo, 28, who has four pending assault cases against him, surrendered in Baguio City on Wednesday to his former chief at the Eastern Police District, Chief Supt. George Aliño, now Cordillera police director. Castillo presented papers which suggested that junior police officers assigned in Mandaluyong in the last 10 years had been "framed up" or terrorized by a city government official to protect erring people under his employ. Castillo said he surrendered to expose the official who has abused small police officers. Castillo presented himself to Aliño and the National Police Commission after negotiating for a safe conduct guarantee, and a commitment to investigate the dismissal of about 20 policemen in Mandaluyong for what he described as trumped-up charges. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Daboy's . . . (From page A25)

around 12:30 a.m. with some of her friends when a visibly drunk Fernandez arrived.

As the actor was walking in, he reportedly spotted Asido and approached her. Fernandez then allegedly uttered to the complainant: "I wanna see your ass."

Asido said she ignored Fernandez reasoning the young actor was under the influence of liquor.

Ignored, Fernandez allegedly took Asido's hand, forced it toward his crotch and rubbed it over his sex organ despite the protestation of the complainant.

Asido told police she managed to free her hand from Fernandez's grip, then ran into the bar comfort room. She later proceeded to the police station to report the incident.

She told police that she would be consulting lawyers on the proper charges to be filed against the young actor.

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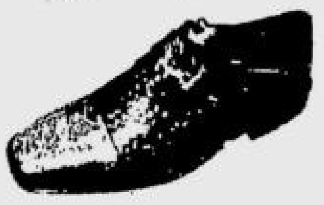

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Quiz show with the mostest

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

QUIZ programs have become popular on local TV not just because they test contestants and viewers' knowledge of "monumental trivia," but also because they offer such huge cash prizes—or promise to.

Fact is, if you survey the cash prizes awarded by quiz shows this past year, only a few contestants have actually won a million bucks.

Which makes some people wonder if a number of the shows in question employ a sophisticated system to psychologically inhibit contestants from winning the biggest cash prizes—but that's another story.

Quite without subjective coloring, let's simply observe that those million-peso pots have been slow in getting anywhere within the grasp of quiz-show contestants.

This, marked contrast to our noontime TV shows' game or quiz portions, which award million-peso-plus prizes quite regularly—without even requiring much trivia knowledge, just the knack for guessing which box contains which winning number or combination of numbers, etc.

Interestingly enough, it's the evening edition ("Korek na Korek Ka Diyan") of one of these noontime quiz portions that has been awarding more than its share of million-peso prizes of late, making it ``the quiz show with the mostest" on local prime-time TV.

In fact, the show has been on the tube for only a couple of months, but it's already had more million-peso winners than some quiz programs that have been telecasting for more than a year.

Thus, we can't really blame its quizmasters, **Vic Sotto** and **Joey de Leon**, for puckishly wondering why some other programs are so niggardly in the way that they reward their contestants . . .

Shows like "Korek na Korek . . ." have effectively upped the ante for other quiz and game programs as far as big cash prizes go, and those shows really have no choice but to try to keep up with Vic and Joey's prize-giving spree.

This leaves shows like "Wheel of Fortune" and "Family Feud" in the lurch, since they offer smaller cash rewards. On the local quiz and game show field these days, money speaks, and relatively modest prizes merely whisper. Perhaps the rewards offered by these shows can be doubled, to generate greater interest and excitement?

On 'Oprah'

'OPRAH' on Star World offers these treats at 1 p.m. from Dc. 17 to 21:

Monday, Dec. 17, "Thank You Day"—Oprah helps viewers express their gratitude to people who have made a huge difference in their lives.

Tuesday, Dec. 18, "Dr. Phil's Get Real Challenge (Part 6)." Dr. Phil dares 42 strangers to "get real" on TV.

Wednesday, Dec. 19, "Appreciating Your Life." Testimonies from many guests, including the widow of one of the heroes of the United flight that crashed in Pennsylvania, and a New York police officer working at "Ground Zero."

Thursday, Dec. 20, "Music to Heal Our Hearts." Featuring gospel greats **BeBe** and **Cece Winans**, **Dorothy McClurkin** and **Sam Harris**, and operatic soprano **Denyce Graues**.

Friday, Dec. 21, "Women and Alcohol." Oprah discusses how a woman can tell when alcohol is a problem in her life—and what she can do about it.

Feedback

FROM **Rowena R. Campos** of Quezon City: "One of the most exciting projects this year was the filming of **Lualhati Bautista**'s `Dekada '70' with **Chito Roño** directing the movie, and **Vilma Santos** being cast in the lead role. However, many months have passed and the important project seems to have been put on hold. What gives?

'hatever the problems may be, the movie should be completed because it is important, and it could also be another feather in the cap of Ms Vilma Santos . . ."

NUT'S Note: We checked and got these updates: Earlier this year, Vilma made herself scarce due to threats on her safety due to some political troubles, so shooting on 'Dekada '70' was halted.

Even after Vilma resurfaced, however, shooting has yet to be resumed, for some conflicting reasons (depends on whom you ask): problems with the material, budget, project viability, making Vilma look sufficiently young for the circa-'70s scenes, etc.

Like you, I also trust that, after threshing out these and other possible problems, the movie can resume shooting soon, so we can get to see it next year.

MUÑOZ. From product endorser to film actor.

'Billy' hits it big in tinseltown

By REMY M. UMEREZ

WHO'D have thought the "Hello Billy" series of commercials would be the boost Carlo Muñoz needed to launch his career in show business?

Well, it did and the 21-year-old actor has had his pick of major movie roles.

In his fourth year in show business, the Batch 6 Star Circle member has completed his fourth movie, the wartime epic "Yamashita Treasure."

Like the rest of the star-studded cast representing three generations of actors, Carlo has to audition for the part of the young Carmelo "Lolo Melo" Rosales, also played by revered actor Armando Goyena, a matinee idol of the '50s.

Piolo Pascual was supposed to portray the role, but the heartthrob's schedule would not permit.

Someone from Star Cinema then suggested Carlo for the part. Although megman Chito Roño has seen Carlo in the PLDT commercials, it was not enough to convince the director that Carlo was right for the part. He made Carlo work for it.

Nervous

Carlo auditioned and passed.

The young actor admitted he felt nervous when he reported on his first shooting day.

"I felt insecure," Carlo said. "I was afraid I would do something wrong and upset the director. I have this impression of Chito Roño as super-stern. *Iyon pala*, he is a very funny guy who never runs out of stories to tell. But once he shouts 'action,' you'd better know your lines and blocking."

He describes his role as physically draining.

"The hardest part was the torture scene which we shot in Anilao, Batangas. I had to be pulled down 50 feet of water by weights. I had to learn how to breathe properly for the longest period and act at the same time. It was scary and difficult, I prayed I'd do it right on the first take."

Carlo has worked with Rowell Santiago in "Luv Text" and Jose Javier Reyes in "Narinig Mo Ba ang Latest". Soon, he will get the chance to work under Olive Lamazan in a romantic comedy inspired by "The Wedding Planner."

Every member of the Muñoz family is supporting his career, especially his brother Leandro, who is also an ABS-CBN talent. Carlo says there is no professional jealousy between them.

Not extravagant

Before the "Billy" series, Carlo appeared in seven small commercials. The money he earned from the ads enabled him to buy a car.

"I am not an extravagant person. I bought a car because it is a necessity. I don't spend much on clothes either since I get most of them for free."

He can relate to the "Billy" role because of the family ties which is strong in his own household, as well as that of the character he portrayed. In fact, Carlo is particularly close to his mom.

He enjoyed filming "Yamashita Treasure" because he loves action adventure movies.

"I was practically awed by the huge set constructed," Carlo said. "Another plus are the special effects using computer-generated images. We really have gone a long way when it comes to special effects. Global *ang* dating *ng* 'Yamashita' and I feel privileged being a part of it."

Carlo wants to come across as an all-around performer. Unfortunately, he cannot afford to be unwholesome in his portrayals because of his image as product endorser.

For the moment, Carlo is a confirmed bachelor, seeing no one special at the moment.

"I don't want to be tied down to a girlfriend because of the nature of my profession," he said. "Even if she understands my job, it will still be unfair to her. Texting is not my idea of sustaining a relationship."

So, has the Billy commercial put the third sex in a bad light?

"I don't think so. There was no such intention. Some gay friends of mine took the 'Joey' character as something delightfully amusing."

Pops set to open 2002 with a bang

SHOWS

THERE'S no stopping Pops Fernandez as she prepares to begin 2002 with flourish.

After her highly successful birthday concert at the Music Museum, the undisputed Concert Queen jumps right back into the concert scene in January.

This time, she invades Onstage in Greenbelt, Makati City, for a series of Friday-Saturday shows, "Weekends With Pops," which starts Jan. 4 and runs for the whole month.

With the show revolving around interesting and relevant themes and topics, "Weekends With Pops" promises to provide the concert habitues something different and spectacular.

Pops will do new numbers, including a Corrs medley, a female version of the hit song "Superman," a medley of Filipino *kilig* songs like "Mr. DJ" and "High School Life," and her version of the "Moulin Rouge" song, "One Day I'll Fly Away."

Joining Pops onstage is "Asap" mainstay RJ Rosales, plus different surprise guests every weekend.

Noli Eala, president of ArianWorks Management Corporation, the concert producer, says Pops' uncanny ability to combine singing and dancing talent with hosting flair makes for a perfect formula for four weekends of fun and entertainment to start the year.

ArianWorks is Manila's newest event management and concert production group that promises to make a difference with innovative concepts.

Floy Quintos, who recently directed the successful shows of Tessie Tomas, Franco Laurel and Ai-Ai de las Alas, is stage director for "Weekends With Pops." Veteran arranger-composer Homer Flores is the musical director.

"Weekends with Pops" is presented by Viva Mineral Water with Agfa, Red Bull, Magnolia Cheese and Athena. Other sponsors include Metrobank ET, San Miguel Super Dry Beer, Lactacyd, Volvo, L'Oreal, Rem Corporation, Hapee toothpaste and Levi's.

Tri-media sponsors include 92.3 Joey's Rhythm, Wave 89.1, 93.9 dwKC, 99.5 RT, Mellow Touch 94.7, 103.5 K-Lite and FWD Magazine.

'Crossover Live'

THE hottest party series "Crossover Live" makes a much-awaited return to Davao City.

It's a double celebration on Dec. 15, as the party celebrates not only the Christmas season but also the third anniversary of Marco Polo Hotel when "Crossover Live" features Sabor Latino, 9 p.m. at the scenic poolside of the Marco Polo Hotel.

The Latin band will perform a mix of Crossover tunes, reggae and tropical jazz music that will keep the crowd dancing till the wee hours.

"Crossover Live" in Davao is presented by Café Puro Jade Blend, Cebu Pacific and Mitsubishi Adventure. It is supported in part by Epson, SM Supermarket, Don Henrico's, Panasonic Flat Series Colored Television, Salad Dressing, Barcelo Pearl Farm Island Resort and New Pantene Smooth and Silky.

Tune in to 93.1 Crossover Davao if you want to be part of the special celebration.

'Lunchbreak' goes remote

THE NOONTIME variety show, "Lunch Break" of IBC 13 joins the weekly Christmas celebrations at the Luneta Boardwalk on Dec. 16.

Hosted by comedy stars Bernardo Bernardo, Leonard Obal, Earl Ignacio, and Dang Cruz plus promising talents Yam Ledesma, Aiza Marquez, Everly Locsin and Ivan Gonzales, the program is one of the highlights of the month-long festivities at the said future tourism landmark.

The Luneta Boardwalk, touted to be a world-class one-stop tourism center, is a project of the Office of the President, Department of Tourism, Philippine Tourism Authority and the City of Manila.

Once completed, the Boardwalk will showcase the diverse cultures of Filipinos from regional cuisine to handicrafts to music and plays, so local and foreign tourists will have a one-stop experience in Manila, according to PTA general manager Nixon Kua.

"Lunchbreak" is produced by MMG Entertainment Group Inc.

Park-goers will also be treated to a number of special events. The UP Voice Ensemble and the PTA Chorale will perform in a concert on Dec. 15.

The Boardwalk is open daily from 4 a.m. to midnight.

"Regine at the Movies"

TIME and again, Regine Velasquez has proven her crowd-drawing power. In her movies, recordings and concert performances, the response that she gets is overwhelming as expected.

Like in her latest concert series, "Regine at the Movies," where a crowd of music enthusiasts and Regine fans lining up at the venue every Friday and Saturday night is already a usual sight in Greenbelt Makati.

Each night highlighted by the deafening applause for Regine's consistent performance. From her first two weekend shows at the Music Museum to its ongoing run at Onstage Greenbelt, this scenario remains the same. The result, a certified hit series that makes an extended run inevitable.

Concert producer Maxi-Media International announces more performances for "Regine at the Movies," extended to all weekends of December.

Soar high with Regine as she brings back songs from unforgettable films like "Tootsie," "Fame," "Dirty Dancing," "Titanic," "Armageddon," "Up Close and Personal," "My Best Friend's Wedding," and latest hit movies like, "America's Sweethearts" and Regine's own blockbuster films.

Reminisce the good old movie themes and new favorites with Regine on Dec. 15, 16, 21, 22, 28, 29 and 30 at Onstage, 2/F of Greenbelt Mall, Makati. Show starts 9 p.m.

Tickets at P 1,200, P900 and P600 are available at all Ticketworld outlets (891-5610), major National Bookstore branches, Robinson's Place and Robinson's Galleria, Tower Records Makati and Alabang, Onstage Ticketron and at Maxi-Media office (551-5447/ 551-1039).

FERNANDEZ. A concert series to start 2002.

VELASQUEZ. Extended concert series.

Benefit at the carnival

IN KEEPING up with the Christmas spirit of giving and sharing, NU 107, the home of new rock, will stage a free concert, "Alternativity 2001," 4 p.m., Dec. 15 at the Boom na Boom Carnival, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd.

The show is a benefit for the foundations for indigent and street children.

Featured are 14 local bands who will perform alternative and pop-rock music — Ciudad, Sugar Free, Pin-Up Girls, Rayyn, Moonstar 88, Fatal Posporos, Monsterbot, Dictalicience, Twisted Halo, Marty Mcfly, Chernobyl, Candy Audio Line, Itchyworms and Betrayed.

Listeners are encouraged to donate clothes, toys and canned goods to get free entrance tickets.

Donations can be forwarded to NU 107 office Room 202 Strata 200 Bldg., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Or call 634-6513 to 15 for details.

'Live at the Ruins'

"REPUBLIC of Malate: Live at the Ruins" is a fund-raising concert for the displaced employees of the restaurant and entertainment venue which was razed by fire last month.

The concert features Color It Red, Oasys, Noli Aurillo, Cynthia Alexander, Strawberry Fields, Mike and Noah, Moonstar 88, Jun Lopito and Brownman Revival.

The concert will be held at 9 tomorrow night, Dec. 15. Tickets at P200. For inquiries, call Good News Café at 551-7251 to 55.

SABOR Latino set to invade Davao for "Crossover" concert.

MATTHEW MODINE

A disciple of acting

BY LEAH SALTERIO

HE WAS seen as a war soldier in Stanley Kubrick's "Full Metal Jacket," a love-struck FBI agent in Jonathan Demme's "Married to the Mob," a swashbuckler in Renny Harlin's "Cutthroat Island," and many other varied and memorable roles on the big screen.

Yet, even after nearly two decades in the movies, versatile Hollywood actor Matthew Modine still doesn't aspire for any dream role.

"I consider the roles like Christmas presents wrapped under the tree," Matthew tells the INQUIRER in a phone interview from London.

"I'm looking forward to opening the packages and I always think that inside one of them, there's something I never imagined, completely surprising and different."

The youngest of seven children in a tightly knit Mormom family, Matthew knew he wanted to become an actor even when he was still a child, after he saw a documentary about the film, "Oliver."

He also developed his love for acting by watching movies in drive-in theaters, which his dad used to run.

"When I was growing up in Utah, I believed my dream would happen," Matthew grants. "I started making preparations, but mostly on my own. There was no encouragement from my parents, who had no great enthusiasm when they learned that I wanted to become an actor. They didn't pay any attention to it. They thought it was just a fantasy."

But that didn't stop Matthew from pursuing his goal. He left his family and went to New York, where he took up acting lessons with Stella Adler.

Still, Matthew had to struggle to attain his dream. In his early adult years, he did odd jobs including digging ditches, grinding valves and working on cars. But it didn't take long before he started getting bit roles in soap operas and TV commercials.

He juggled his hours between acting and working as a chef in a Manhattan restaurant, where he met his wife, Cari Rivera, with whom he has two children.

Matthew made his big screen debut in John Sayles' 1983 film, "Baby It's You," where he played a high school student.

That same year, Matthew won the Venice Film Festival best actor award for his work in Robert Altman's "Streamers," a parable about manhood, death and relationships between races at the dawn of America's involvement with Vietnam.

Unlike other actors who had to use a screen name, Matthew was known by the name given by his parents. He has a second name, though, "Avery," but it was never used in any of his film acting credits.

"Sometimes, I wished I had a screen name so I could have kept myself separated from my career," he says.

Citations

Through the years, Matthew has had the chance to play a gamut of challenging portrayals and work with noted actors and filmmakers. And he has been honored with acting citations, too.

In 1988, Matthew earned a Golden Globe nomination for "What the Deaf Man Heard." He also received Golden Globe and Emmy Award nominations for his performance on HBO's award-winning AIDS drama, "And the Band Played On."

Now a veteran of over 40 films, Matthew is thankful he has transcended playing boy-next-door type of roles in his early movies.

"The reason I love this job is you get to try so many different things," he allows. "When they asked me to be a pirate in 'Cutthroat Island,' I recalled all the pirate movies I saw.

"I did 'Full Metal Jacket' because I grew up watching the Vietnam war on TV and it was something that was very disturbing. I did the film to try to understand why people used violence to solve problems and why we can't find peaceful solutions to the problems."

Matthew also considers Alan Parker's "Birdy" as an important film role. His portrayal of the title character as a withdrawn, schizophrenic Vietnam soldier earned for him critical acclaim.

Matthew offered support to Mel Gibson and played his outlaw brother in "Mrs. Soffel." His wide range of portrayals include a yuppie in "Pacific Heights," a cocky medical student in "Gross Anatomy," a wrestler in "Vision Quest," an aspiring yachtsman in "Wind" and an unhappily married neurosurgeon in another Robert Altman opus, "Short Cuts."

Matthew also played the lead in the Biblical TV mini-series, "Jacob," megged by Peter Hall.

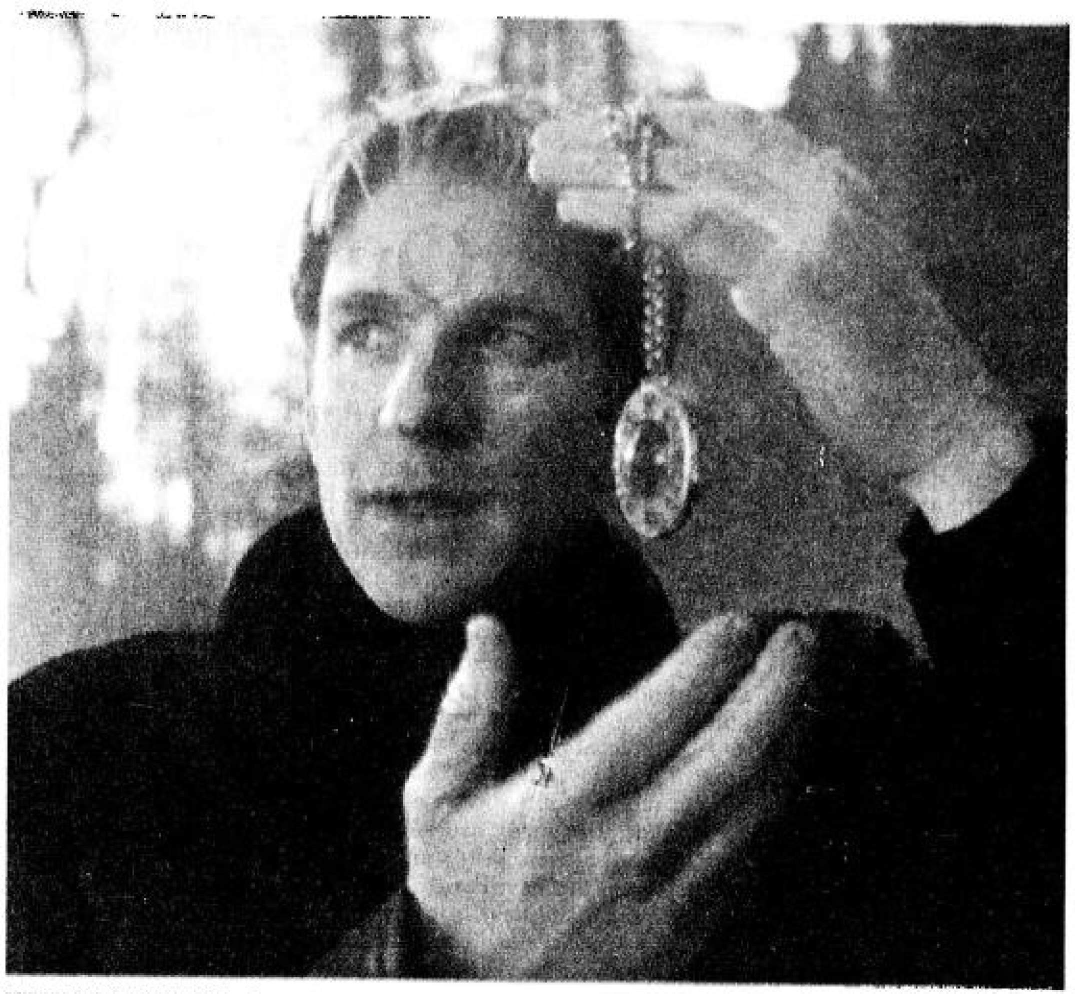
Best work

Matthew was last seen in Oliver Stone's "Any Given Sunday," where he worked with Al Pacino and James Woods.

"But I believe my best work has yet to come," Matthew says. "You have to grow up. An actor ages like wine. There's young wine, then it ma-

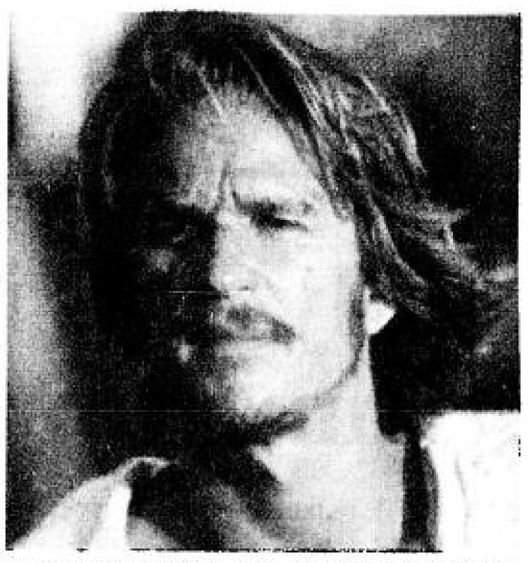
A DISCIPLE/ A29

After over 40 films in nearly 20 years in the movies, the actor believes his best work is 'still to come'



THE VERSATILE Matthew Modine recreates fairytale magic as the lead in the made-for-TV movie, "Jack and the Beanstalk."

MODINE always knew he would become an actor.



A SWASHBUCKLER in Renny Harlin's "Cutthroat Island."

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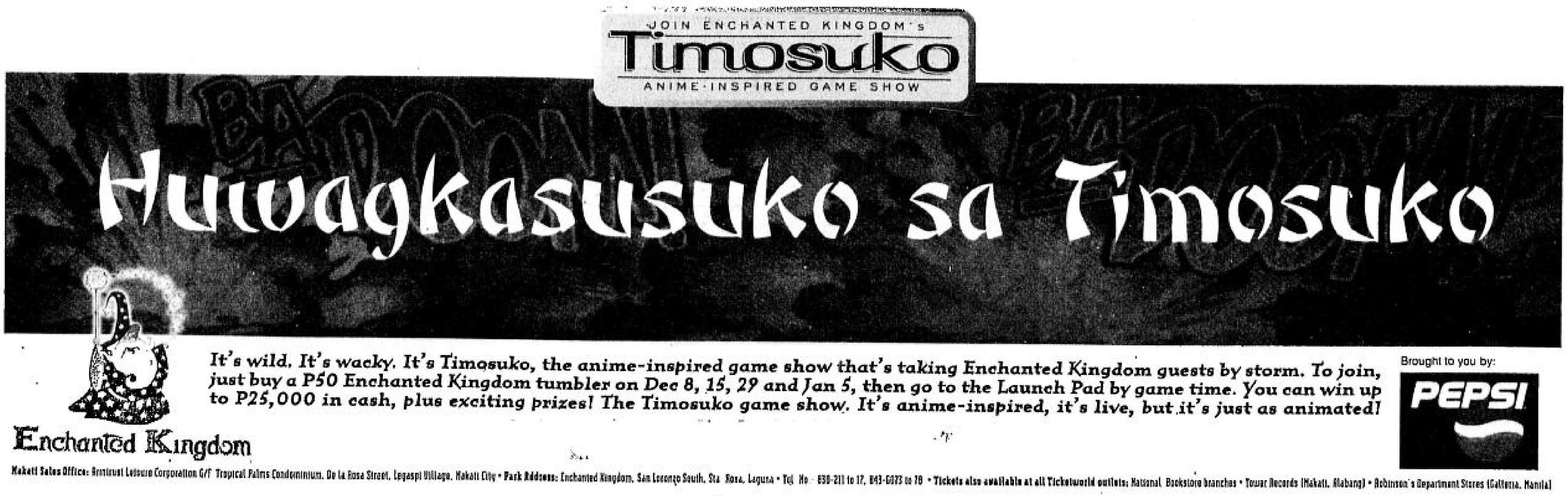
DECEMBER 14 (FRIDAY) SCREENING SCHEDULE

Time	Greenbelt 1	Greenbelt 3	Glorietta 4
11:40AM	Clouds of May (Turkey) G	Under the Sand (France) R-18	Unfinished Song (Iran) G
2:10PM	This Is My Moon (Sri Lanka) R-18	No Turning Back (USA/Spain) PG-13	Farinelli (Belgium) R-18
4:40PM	To and Fro* (De Ida y Vuelta) (Mexico)	Divided We Fall (Czech Republic) PG-13	Firefly Dreams (Japan) PG-13
7:10PM	Batang West Side** *** (Philippines)	Greedy Guts (Otesanek) (Czech Republic) R-18	The King is Dancing (Le Roi Danse) (Belgium) R-18
9:40PM	Batang West Side (Philippines) (cont.)	Roads and Bridges (USA) G	Happy End (Korea) R-18

*MTRCB Rating Pending ** Director will be present *** World Premiere



It's wild. It's wacky. It's Timosuko, the anime-inspired game show that's taking Enchanted Kingdom guests by storm. To join, just buy a P50 Enchanted Kingdom tumbler on Dec 8, 15, 29 and Jan 5, then go to the Launch Pad by game time. You can win up to P25,000 in cash, plus exciting prizes! The Timosuko game show. It's anime-inspired, it's live, but it's just as animated!

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LENDING support to Mel Gibson (left) in "Mrs. Soffel."

A disciple of acting

(From page A28)

tures and becomes something else."

Off camera, Matthew says he's "just someone who's curious, asking questions and enjoying life."

The actor's latest acting assignment is a fairytale role in "Jack and the Beanstalk," a made-for-TV movie on the Hallmark Channel.

Writers Jim Hart and Brian Henson have fused the classic fairy tale with a story set in modern-day England. Matthew is wealthy developer Jonathan William Von Hapsburg Robinson (Jack), who discovers that his family has a curse and his ancestor built their wealth by killing and stealing.

Fantastic world

To undo the curse, Jack must travel to a fantastic world where fairy tales are not a work of fiction—where a handful of beans can produce magic and a beanstalk rises into the heavens where an immortal giant lives, breathes and swears vengeance.

To add magic to the made-for-TV movie, the Jim Henson Company lends its state-of-the-art special effects in the reworking of the fairy tale.

Matthew discloses "Jack and the Beanstalk" was shot in London for three months last year. It marks his first time to act in a children's tale.

"I really enjoyed the story because it's a retelling of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' 400 years later," Matthew says. "It's a different Jack. He finds out his ancestor was a thief and a murderer. So he takes on the responsibility to right the wrong of the past.

"It was a great pleasure to work on this project. I get to climb the legendary giant beanstalk all the time. Plus, there's the giant, the wonder goose and the golden harp."

In the made-for-TV movie, Matthew shares acting credits with veteran actors Richard Attenborough, Jon Voight and Vanessa Redgrave.

"It's absolute pleasure on my part to work with the most extraordinary actors I've ever met," Matthew says of his costars. "Richard Attenborough is a real gentleman."

"Jack and the Beanstalk" will air as two-parts special (Dec. 16 and 17, 9 p.m.) on the Hallmark Channel.

After "Jack and the Beanstalk," Matthew completed four films for independent productions.

"It's a wonderful privilege to give young filmmakers an opportunity to get a job for an actor like myself," he says. "You act because you want to share more of yourself with your audience. I believe that's important to make you last in this business."

MODINE (left) works with director Robert Altman (right) and Pierre Minot in "Streamers," which also stars David Alan Grier (second from left).

Jamie gets Awit, CMMA trophies

RIVERA. Inspirational Diva

SHE'S not dubbed as "Inspirational Diva" for nothing. Long after the strains of the "Jubilee Song" from her quintuple album and "Heal Our Land" from her double platinum album have faded away, Jamie Rivera is savoring the success of her two best-selling inspirational songs.

Recently, Awit Awards handed Jamie the best inspirational album trophy, while the Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA) named "Heal Our Land" the best album of the year.

These twin honors bless and humble Jamie all the more.

"I see Divine Providence at work," she says. "I never imagined my career will turn out like this. After all, I started in pop. Remember 'Hey, It's Me?"

But it did. And today, Jamie is much sough-after for fund-raisers, prayer rallies (the most recent was the one led by President Macapagal at Luneta) and other charitable events.

What makes Jamie an inspirational artist whose songs click (another song, "Tanging Yaman," went three times platinum)?

"I make sure everyone -- even a little child -- can sing my songs," she answers.

Jamie's latest recording effort is "Seasons," which was recently launched on ABS-CBN's Sunday noontime show, "Asap."

Jamie will sing about 11 important events, which she calls seasons in our lives: New Year's Day, Valentine's Day, Graduation, Lent, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Wedding Day, Independence Day, Birthdays, All Soul's Day and Christmas.

Two of her favorites are "Christmas Will Always Be Christmas," whose lyrics she composed, with Juan Miguel Salvador providing the melody; and "You Will Call Her Mother," featuring Jamie with Freddie Santos and her daughter Reine in a simulated conversation with God.

'Batang Westside' premieres in Cinemanila

THE LONGEST film in Philippine cinema, "Batang Westside," premieres in a much-awaited invitational screening at the Cinemanila International Film Festival, 7 tonight at the Greenbelt Theater in Makati City.

The five-hour long "Batang Westside," megged by the internationally acclaimed Lav Diaz, tells the story of Hanzel, a Filipino youth who arrives in America for the first time. His death on West Side Avenue across New York remains a mystery. Investigating the case is Jersey City special police detective Juan Mijarez, a fellow Filipino.

Newcomer Yul Servo plays Hanzel in "Batang Westside," while Joel Torre is Juan Mijarez.

Also in the cast are Gloria Diaz, Priscilla Almeda and Angel Aquino, with Art Acuna, Michelle Salvador, Jed Merino, Luis Salvador, Joseph Pe, Raul Arellano, Walton Mallick, Preston Barnes and Ruben Tizon.

On top of the maiden big screen venture is executive producer Antonio S. Veloria, who heads JMCN Productions.

Joey Gosiengfiao is creative producer, Miguel Fable III is cinematographer, Joey Ayala is musical scorer, Ron Dale is film editor, Cesar Hernando is production designer and Rodolfo Gonzales is live sound engineer.

"Batang Westside," written and directed by Lav Diaz, went into post-production at Roadrunner Network Inc. The film's processing was done at New York's Do-Art Studios.

"Batang Westside" is a Hinabing Pangarap presentation of a JMCN production.

Music Museum opens theater mall in Greenhills

THE Music Museum Group Inc. has been known in the entertainment industry as a dynamic group that has invigorated the concert scene. They have always been in the forefront of new and creative ideas.

Now, the Music Museum Group Inc., has a new endeavor, the Greenhills Theater Mall located in the heart of the Greenhills Shopping Center.

The Greenhills Theater Mall is a shopping and theater complex that offers endless bargain opportunities Greenhills is known for. Besides housing a number of boutiques and shops, the Greenhills Theater Mall is spacious, fully air-conditioned and offers free parking for its shoppers.

The Greenhills Theater Mall also has two movie theaters that will show the latest flicks. It is a 255-seater theater, complete with digital sound, upholstered seats, wall-to-wall carpeting and many more. These movie houses are at par with the other popular movie houses within the metropolis.

Starting Dec. 16 every 5 a.m., a *simbang gabi* Mass will be held at the Al Fresco Lobby of the Greenhills Theater Mall, to be officiated by Fr. Nico Bautista. He will also hear the sacrament of resolution (confession) before the Mass.

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2	JOY RIDE
3	JEEPERS CREEPERS
4	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
5	HARRY POTTER
6	JEEPERS CREEPERS

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SUTLA (RE-ISSUE)
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	MUSKETEER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	HARRY POTTER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	EARTHQUAKE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	MVP
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	SUMMER CATCH
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	PISNGI
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MARITAL RAPE / EROTIC DIARIES
ODEON	EARTHQUAKE
ODEON-2	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
ROBEN	PISNGI
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	PUKYUTAN / STORY OF US
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
REMAR	PISNGI
REMAR-2	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	DALAWANG PISNGI
B	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
C	SUTLA (RI)
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-2	SUMMER CATCH
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ROCKSTAR
CINEMA-2	MASAKIT HUWAG IPILIT
CINEMA-3	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE SCORE
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MONSTER, INC.
CINEMA-6	OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW
CINEMA-7	SUTLA (RI)
CINEMA-8	PISNGI
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SUMMER CATCH
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	EARTHQUAKE
CINEMA-12	MOST VALUABLE PRIMATE
CINEMA-14	MUSKETEER
CINEMA-15	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	THE MUSKETEER
CINEMA-2	MONSTERS, INC
CINEMA-3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-4	SUMMER CATCH
CINEMA-5	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-6	THE SCORE
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

Digital film festival

MOV, the first digital film festival in the Philippines that will run Jan. 23 to 30 at the Greenbelt Cinema I, Makati, will showcase some of the landmark films in the history of digital filmmaking. It will include the works of Rob Nilsson, Kidlat Tahimik, Todd Verow and Dogme 95.

Digital filmmaking first entered the scene in 1996 on the heels of exciting technological innovations. Film mavericks caught the digital vibe, churning out well-made films shot on digital cameras that are smaller and cheaper than the typical 35mm camera. It heralded a new, radical era in filmmaking.

The movement tagged as the Digital Revolution Technology has provided filmmakers with powerful new tools that allowed them to create high-quality films on a low budget.

Today, renegade filmmakers are shooting images and recording sound with digital video cameras and using the latest software to edit, mix and create special effects on home computers.

This stripped-down, bare bones approach to making films is a far cry from the dominant Hollywood paradigm of huge production bills and expensive, bulky cameras. The arrival of affordable Digital Video (DV) camcorders has also created unprecedented ultra-low budget production possibilities.

For more information, contact Filmless Films at 433-3496, 921-8434 or oracafe @rocketmail.com.

Visit the festival website at www.mov.moviespage.com

Dolph Lundgren returns

HE made his feature film debut in the James Bond movie "A View To A Kill" and gained worldwide recognition in his uncanny portrayal of Ivan Drago as Sylvester Stallone's opponent in "Rocky IV."

Now, Dolph Lundgren is back in C-Interactive Digital Entertainment's newest action-thriller straight-to-video, "Jill Rips."

In the story, Lundgren plays Murray Wilson, a former boxer and a member of San Francisco Police Department. When his only brother was all tied-up, brutally murdered and thrown in a ship port, Murray launches his own investigation to hunt the criminal.

As he seeks justice and vengeance, he delves himself into a dark and kinky world of high-priced prostitution, S&M, bondage and red leather spandex.

He unravels the secret of his beloved brother—his lifestyle, sex trips and inhuman relationship with his wife, Irene.

For original VHS and VCD copies, call C-Interactive at 245-5011-12 (Manila), 032-4121948 (Cebu) and 082-2210405 (Davao).

Three good books on living and loving

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

"THE GRAND essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for."—**Joseph Addison**

"Happiness is . . . a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."—**Nathaniel Hawthorne**.

Those two quotations came from this charming little book that I recently read titled "The Language of Happiness," edited by **Susan Polis Schutz**. When you need a quick, pick-me-upper, this book is a perfect way to remind yourself that happiness surely has a place in your life.

I'm not a non-fiction fan, but if there's anything I really dislike, it's not being able to contribute a worthwhile opinion during a discussion of a book, especially when it seems everybody else in the group had already read that particular book. In a way, I'm lucky that the writers I work with in "Game KNB" are all avid readers and during taping lulls, we almost always end up having an impromptu book club session.

The book they were all talking about last Saturday was the No. 1 bestseller, "Who Moved My Cheese," written by **Spencer Johnson**. After taping a dozen episodes of "Game KNB" and doing "Buzz" live last Sunday, I was, as expected, hoarse again. Monday was a no-talking day so I got to catch up on my reading.

"Who Moved My Cheese" is short, concise, easy to understand and applicable in character formation and team-building exercises. The lessons that the book tries to impart are an integral, though not hard-sell part of the parable involving four characters. Two are mice named Sniff and Scurry, the other two are "little people" named Hem and Haw. All are traversing a "maze" in search of "cheese," their source of nourishment and happiness.

When the routinary and expected place to find their "cheese" runs out of its supply, how the four characters deal with this change reflects the attitudes that different people take when dealing with the same circumstance.

The most important lesson I gained from this book is the fact that in order for me to live my life to the fullest, I must not only be open to change, it's best that I'm prepared for it, if and when it should occur, because I'm alert and in tune with all that's happening around me.

If the change is adversarial to my current situation, then I should be resilient, ready to stand up after a stumble and be armed with enough faith to keep moving forward.

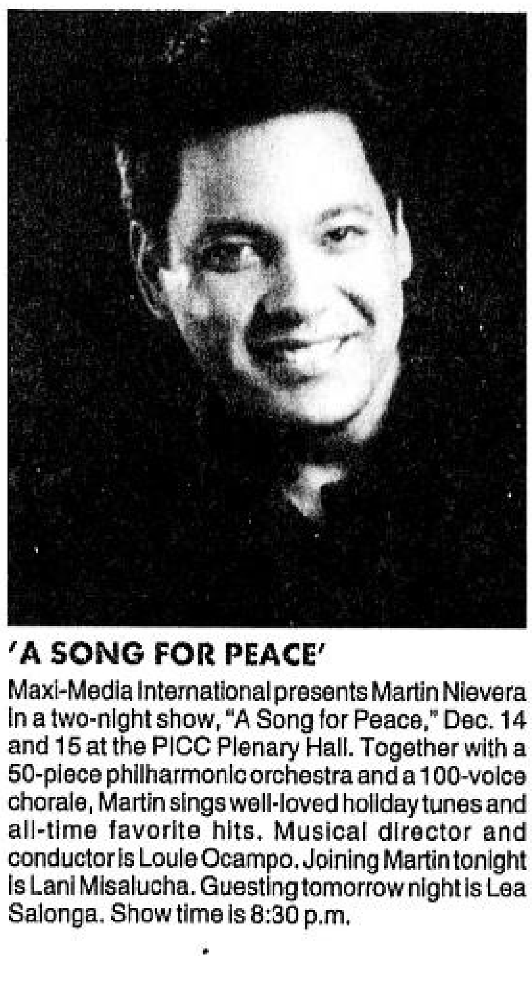
Lastly, I must learn to embrace the changes in my life, not run away from them or pointedly ignore them, because change is constant, and challenges are there precisely to strengthen me.

A couple of weeks ago, I read **Nicholas Sparks**' latest offering, "A Bend in the Road." My sisters, **Pinky** and **Viel** had read it before me, and they were both extolling the book's emotional resonance. They both said it was a tearjerker, but a natural one, and even if halfway through the book I already figured out the identity of the story's narrator, I still couldn't suppress my tears near its conclusion.

"A Bend in the Road" is the love story of Miles Ryan and Sarah Andrews. Their love brings hope back into their lives. It's a love so powerful and committed that it's able to inspire one of the hardest acts known to man, the act of forgiveness.

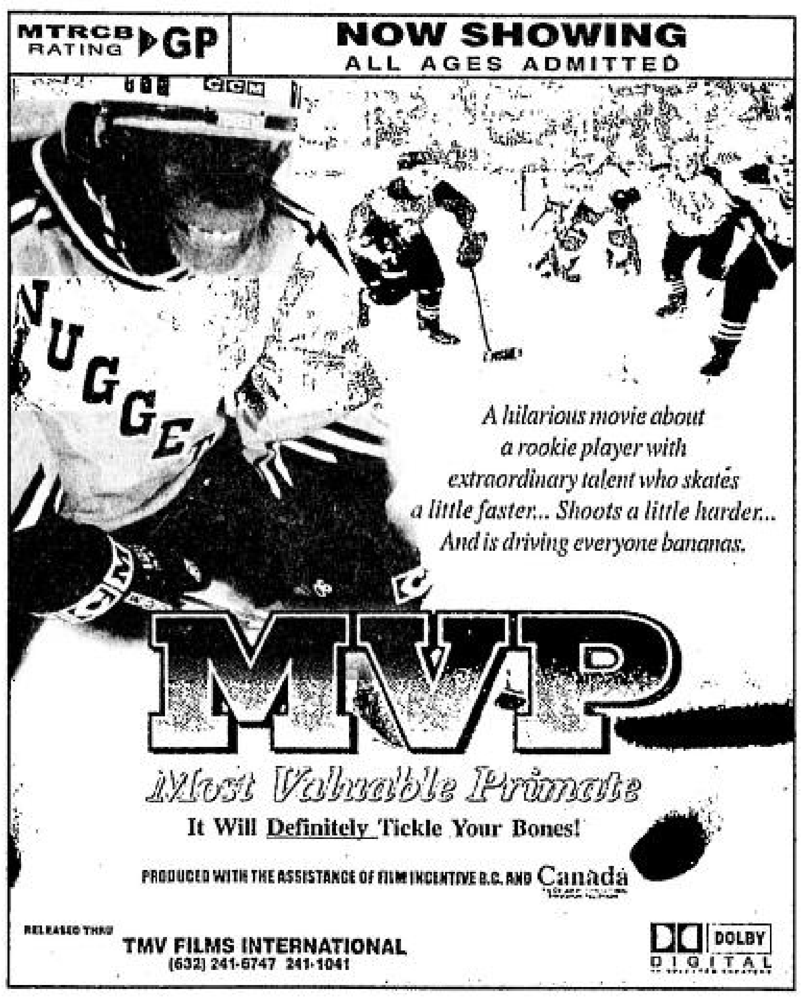
In the past, Nicholas Sparks had written "The Notebook," "Message in a Bottle," "A Walk to Remember" and "The Rescue." His work continues to be insightful and respectful of women's feelings. All his books are consistent bestsellers because they effectively communicate the intricacies, passions, uncertainties, joys, trials and the worth-fighting for aspects of real love.

It's because of his compelling narrative and true-to-life dialogue that we vicariously experience the unquantifiable depth of loving that a man and a woman can ultimately share. His gift is that he makes us all believe that love is part of our reality.



'A SONG FOR PEACE'

Maxi-Media International presents Martin Nievera in a two-night show, "A Song for Peace," Dec. 14 and 15 at the PICC Plenary Hall. Together with a 50-piece philharmonic orchestra and a 100-voice chorale, Martin sings well-loved holiday tunes and all-time favorite hits. Musical director and conductor is Louie Ocampo. Joining Martin tonight is Lani Misalucha. Guesting tomorrow night is Lea Salonga. Show time is 8:30 p.m.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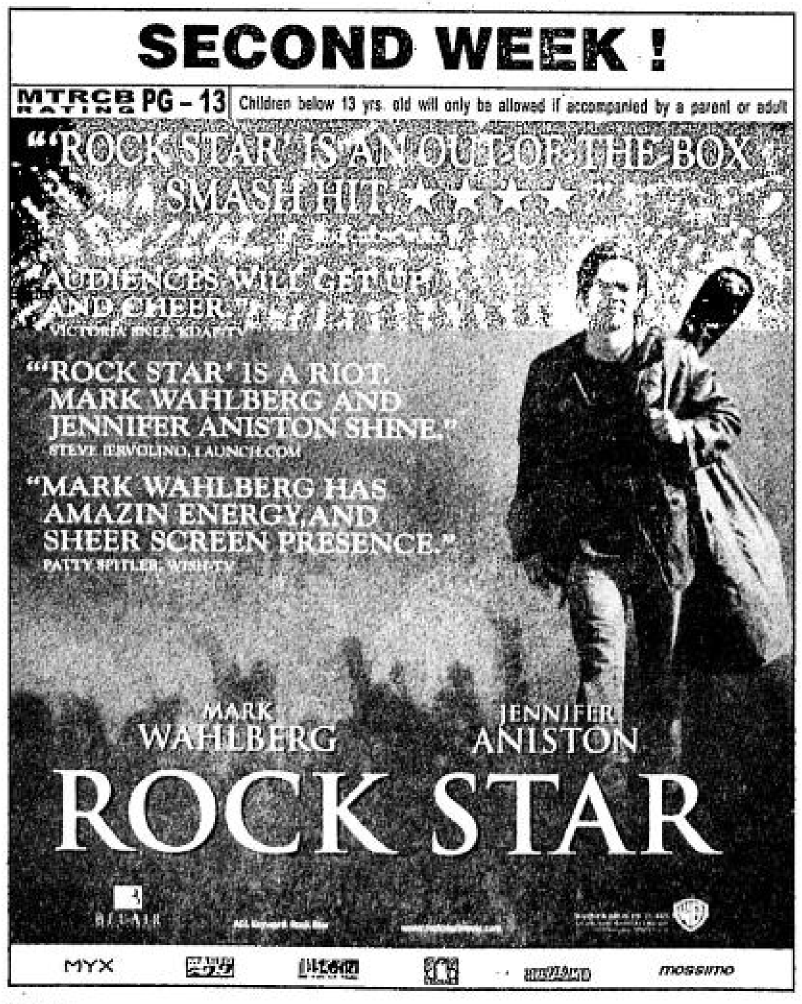
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"MARK WAHLBERG HAS AMAZIN ENERGY, AND SHEER SCREEN PRESENCE."
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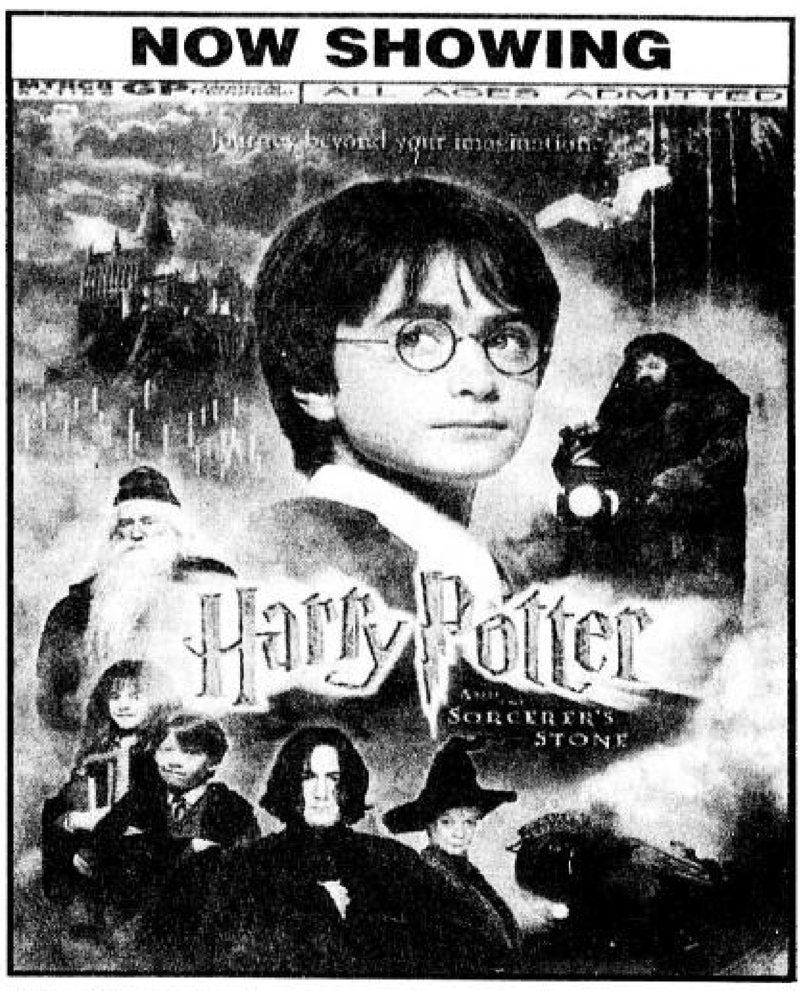
SUMMER CATCH - P 13 12:50, 3:20, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10	SERENDIPITY - P 13 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	THE SCORE - R 18 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.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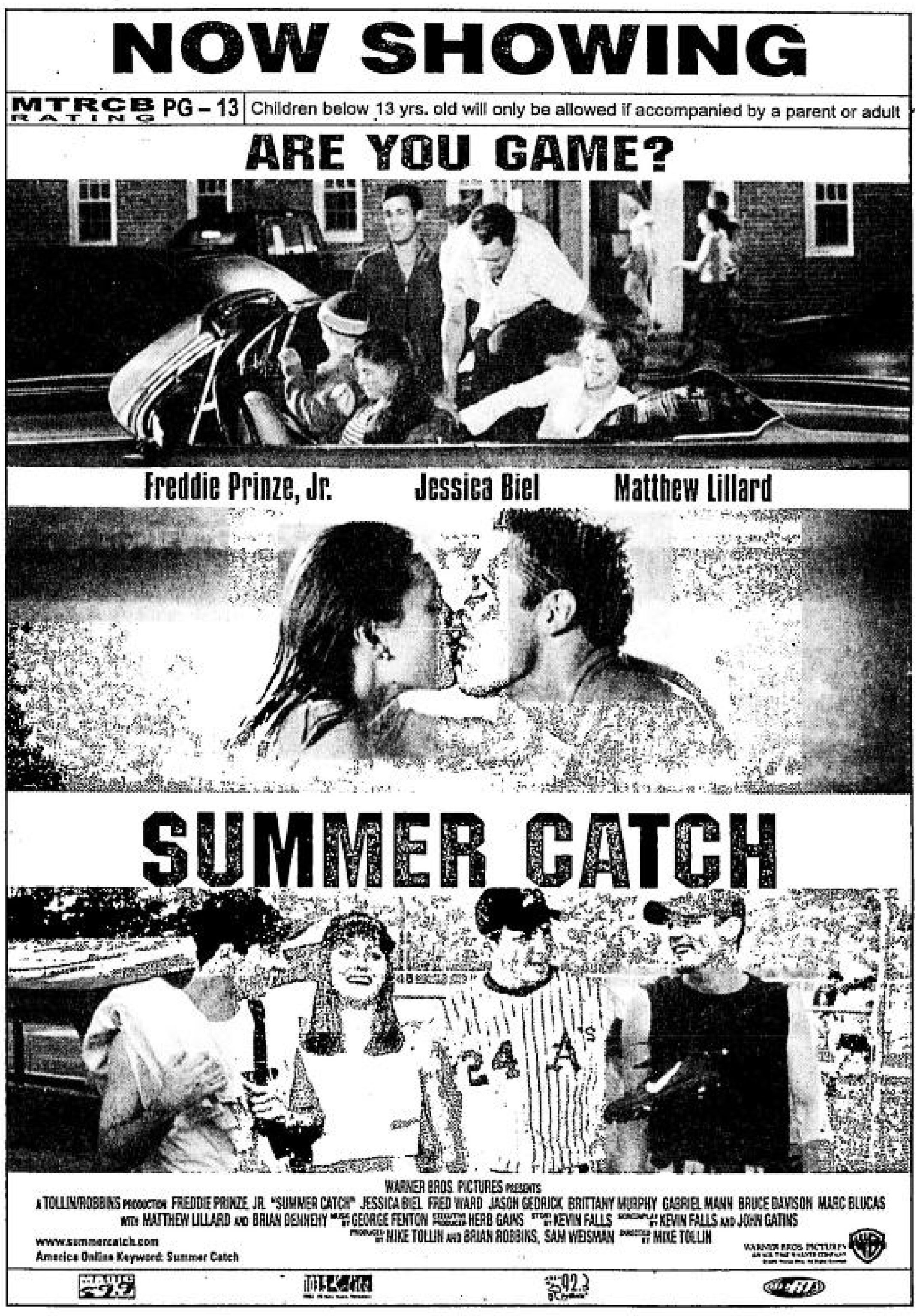
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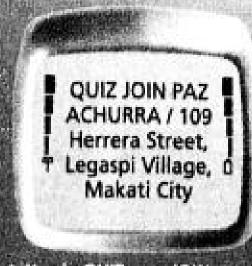
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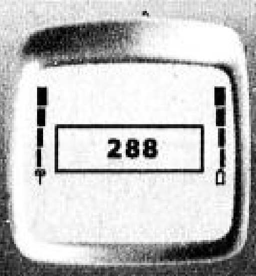
1 Key in QUIZspaceJOIN space<NAME>/<ADDRESS>


288

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Bangko Sentral cuts rates anew

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas cut overnight interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point at its policy-making Monetary Board meeting yesterday.

"The benign inflation outlook in part due to broad stability in the exchange rate and lower oil prices underpin the board's decision to ease monetary policy," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters.

The rate cut, effective today, reduces the overnight borrowing rate to 7.75 percent and the lending rate to 10 percent, levels that should help revive the domestic economy next year.

Under the Bangko Sentral's tiering scheme, however, overnight deposits in the central bank's vaults in excess of P5 billion will earn only 5.75 percent and placements in excess of P10 billion will have a yield of 3.75 percent.

"I think this will probably be the last cut for the year," Buenaventura said, but added this was based on the assumption that the US Federal Reserve would not make any policy moves next week.

The Bangko Sentral has cut rates 16 times and by 7.25 percentage points since Dec. 1 last year, when it began retreating from a high-rate regime adopted to protect the peso.

Buenaventura noted that the policy rates were now down to their six-year lows.

"With the series of rate cuts, market interest rates including the government's borrowing rate should move down further. When this happens, we hope to boost domestic demand and support the economy's growth path," he said.

The Monetary Board was widely expected to follow the lead of the Fed, which cut its rate by a quarter of a percentage point on Tuesday.

Monetary authorities have said they needed to match the US rate cut to keep the differential between US and Philippine rates and mitigate the risk of abrupt shifts of investment funds towards dollar-denominated assets.

Other government officials added that easing monetary policy was needed to stimulate economic activity amid a global downturn that has impacted heavily on the country's exports.

The fixed-income market is still expected to push down the yields of treasury bill rates across all tenors on Monday even after the benchmark 91-day and the six-month treasuries have dipped to single-digit levels and to their lowest since July.

The one-year treasury bill rate has also eased to its lowest this year.

Buenaventura said monetary authorities wanted to ease rates to help boost the economy during the expectedly difficult first half of 2002.

The recovery should start during the second half as Philippine exports start to kick in as a result of an expected rebound in the US economy next year, he noted.

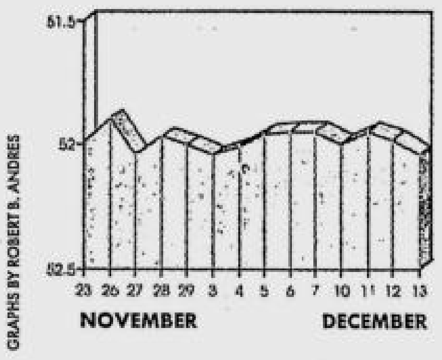
Buenaventura also said that the peso would remain below 52 to a dollar for the remainder of this year.

"I think we are on track and the challenge for next year is how to attract more foreign direct investors. This would be highly influenced by how they would perceive the peace and order situation," Buenaventura had said in an earlier interview.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



Peso-Dollar Rate

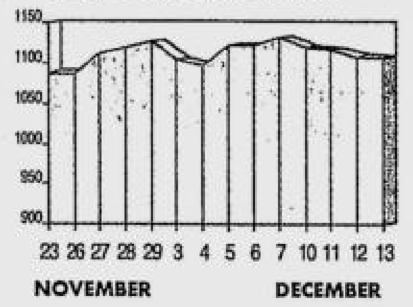
P 52.04 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 13, 2001

¥ 126.36 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Dec. 13, 2001

GOLD:$274.25/274.75
per ounce Hong Kong,
Dec. 13, 2001

STOCK MARKET

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B12)

Shares down 0.1%

SHARES ended lower for the fifth straight session yesterday, led by blue chip PLDT, as profit taking continued to weigh on the market, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 0.89 point, or 0.1 percent, at 1107.73, adding to Wednesday's 0.7 percent decline. The index has lost 2.3 percent since Dec. 7. Turnover was virtually unchanged at P356.17 million from P356.63 million on Wednesday.

"I think what we're seeing is just profit taking from recent gains," said BNP Paribas Peregrine Securities research head Edgar Bancod. "But I suspect there could be an uptick before the end of the year as some investors may want to improve the asset value of their portfolios and be inclined to buy up stocks."

Yesterday's announcement of lower central bank rates did not have an impact on shares since the announcement came after stock trading ended.

Bancod said it has become more difficult to sustain rallies compared with the time foreign investors were actively participating in the market.

"It's mainly local funds propelling the market, that's why our rallies are short-lived," he said. *AP*

Global downturn bottoming out

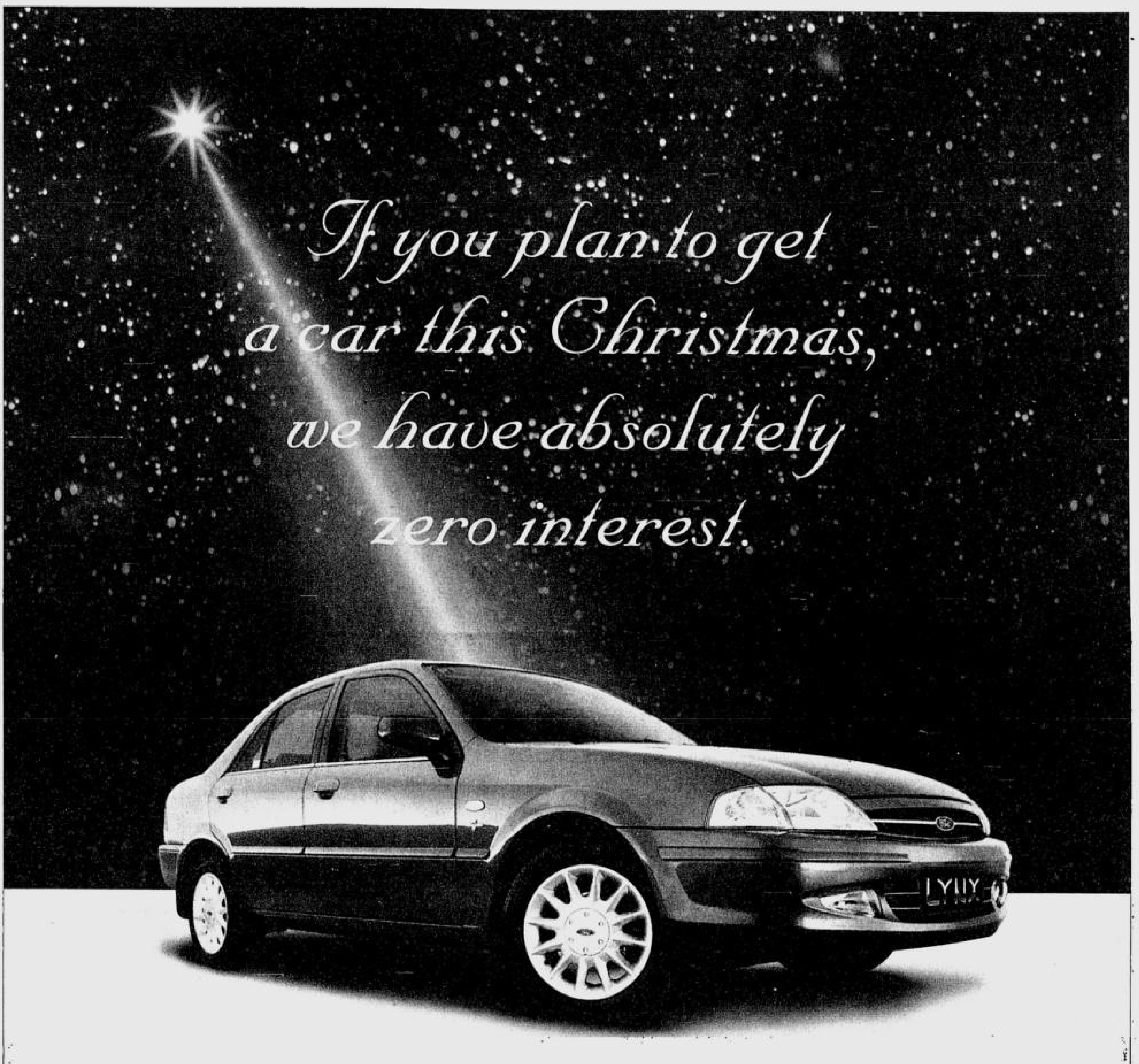
FRANKFURT—The health of the global economy is not getting any worse, but the pace of a rebound next year remains too tough to call, economists said after another rate cut in the US, gloom from Japan and job cuts in Europe.

The US Federal Reserve signaled demand might have stopped falling in a statement accompanying its quarter point interest rate cut on Tuesday. And a slump in Japanese business confidence turned out to be not as severe as some people had feared.

But the human cost of slowing growth continues. On Wednesday, British postal workers learned that 30,000 of them, or more than one in 10, would be axed in order to save 1.2 billion pounds ($1.7 billion) by March 2003.

"There is a dichotomy now visible between incoming data like unemployment and the forward looking indicators," said Vincent Koen, a senior economist at the Organization for Eco-

GLOBAL/ B4



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Gov't names new PNB president, directors

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT will appoint banker Edward Go, former president of Asian Banking Corp., as the new chair of Philippine National Bank.

PNB chair Norberto Nazareno, who is also the president of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., will be among the six directors to be appointed by the government to the PNB board.

Nazareno said in an interview that the government and Lucio Tan would sign next week the term sheet detailing the conversion plan for the P25-billion emergency loan extended by PDIC and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to PNB in October 2000.

"We hope to sign the memorandum of agreement within the year or at the latest, very early next year," the PNB chair said.

PNB president Feliciano Miranda Jr., a nominee of Tan, would have to give way to a government appointee once the MOA had been signed, Nazareno said.

Miranda, a former deputy director of the central bank, was tapped to head PNB on a "transitional basis."

He said current bank directors Francisco Dizon, former president of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., and independent director Vicente Panlilio, former treasurer and executive vice president of Far East Bank, would stay as members of the board.

Nazareno explained that of the 11 members of the PNB board, the government would appoint six (including the bank president) and one independent director.

Tan would have to fill up the remaining five slots and one more independent director.

Of the bank officers, the government and Tan would jointly choose the president from a roster of names to be submitted by state representatives.

The government would choose the bank chair, chair of the executive committee, chief financial officer, and corporate secretary while the taipan would nominate the general counsel, assistant corporate secretary and deputy chief finance officer.

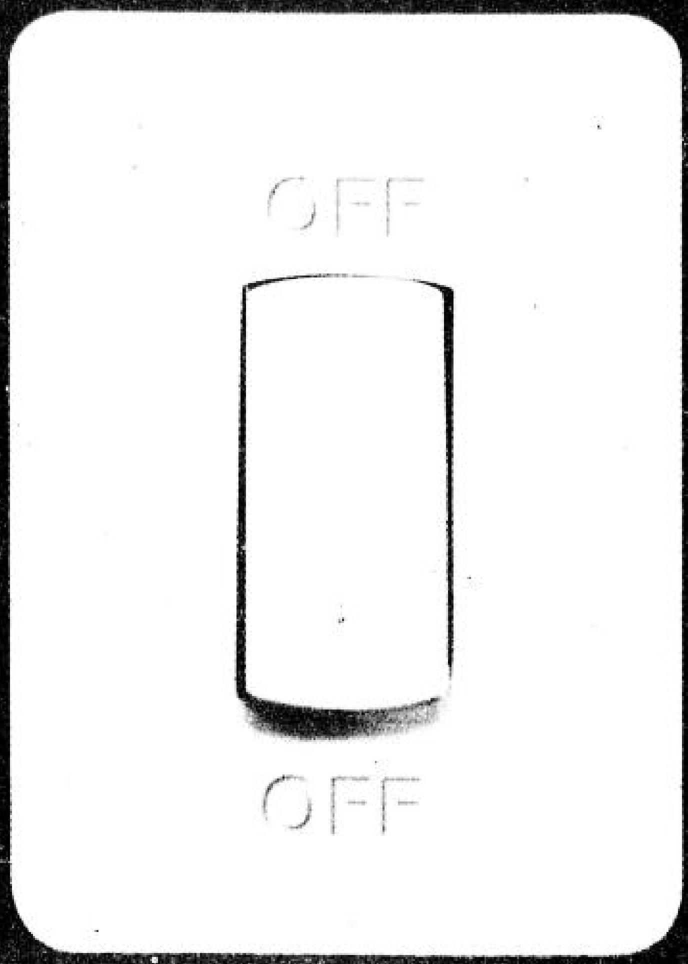
"We would start the selection of the officers after the MOA is signed. The process is proceeding smoothly," Nazareno said.

The PDIC chief said the government was still waiting for the opinion of the Department of Justice on whether the state-owned bank insurer could own shares in a bank that it was regulating.

Of the P25 billion in emergency loan extended to PNB, P15 billion came from the central bank and P10 billion from PDIC.

The term sheet would contain the P40 per share price for the conversion of P7.8 billion in PNB debts into government equity, and would give the state and Tan a 44.98-percent stake each in the bank.

The agreement would also offset P10 billion worth of government advances from the bank while the remaining P6.1 billion would be restructured by the Bangko Sentral over a 10-year period with an interest rate of one percentage point over the 91-day treasury bill yield.



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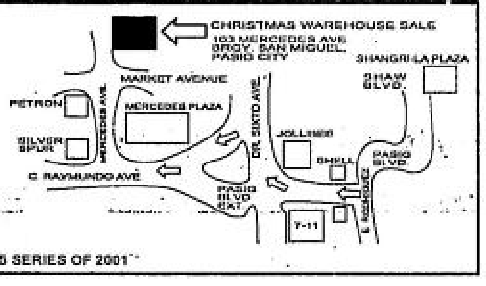

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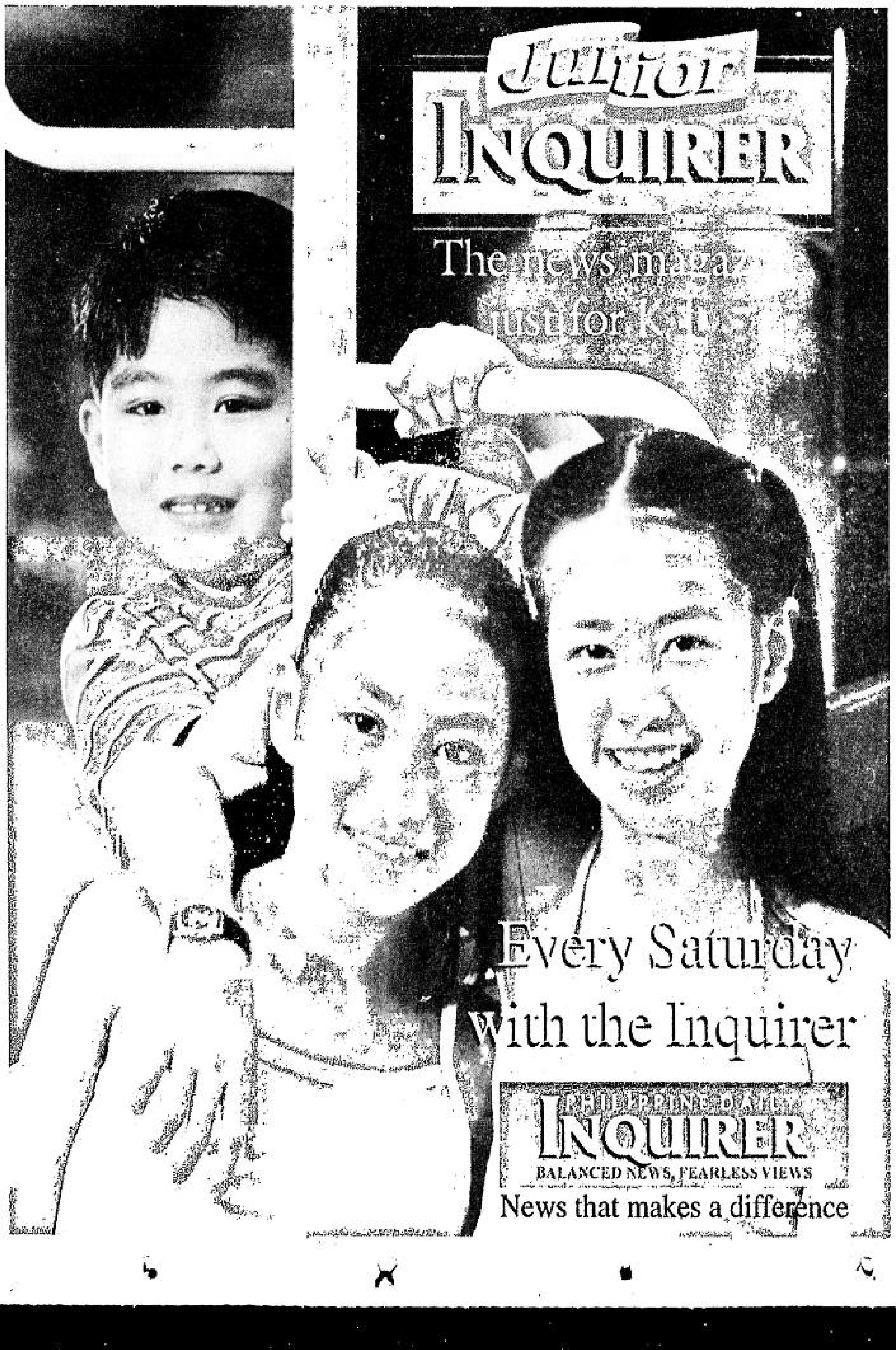

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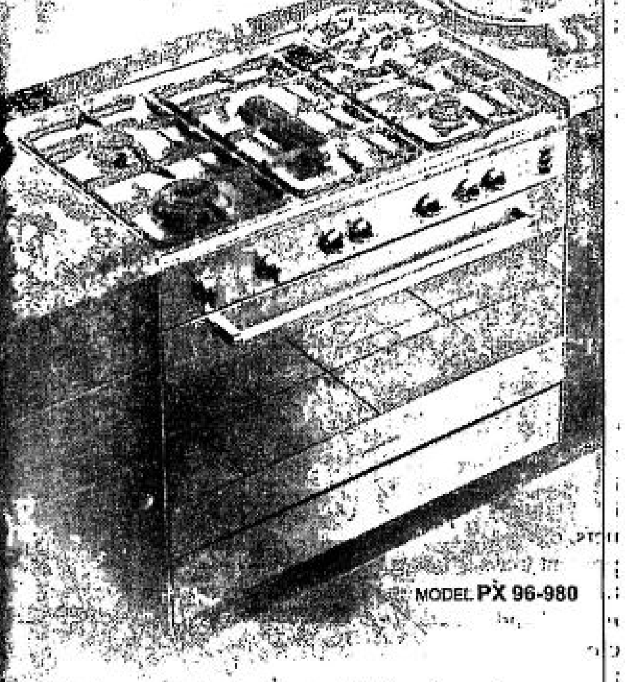

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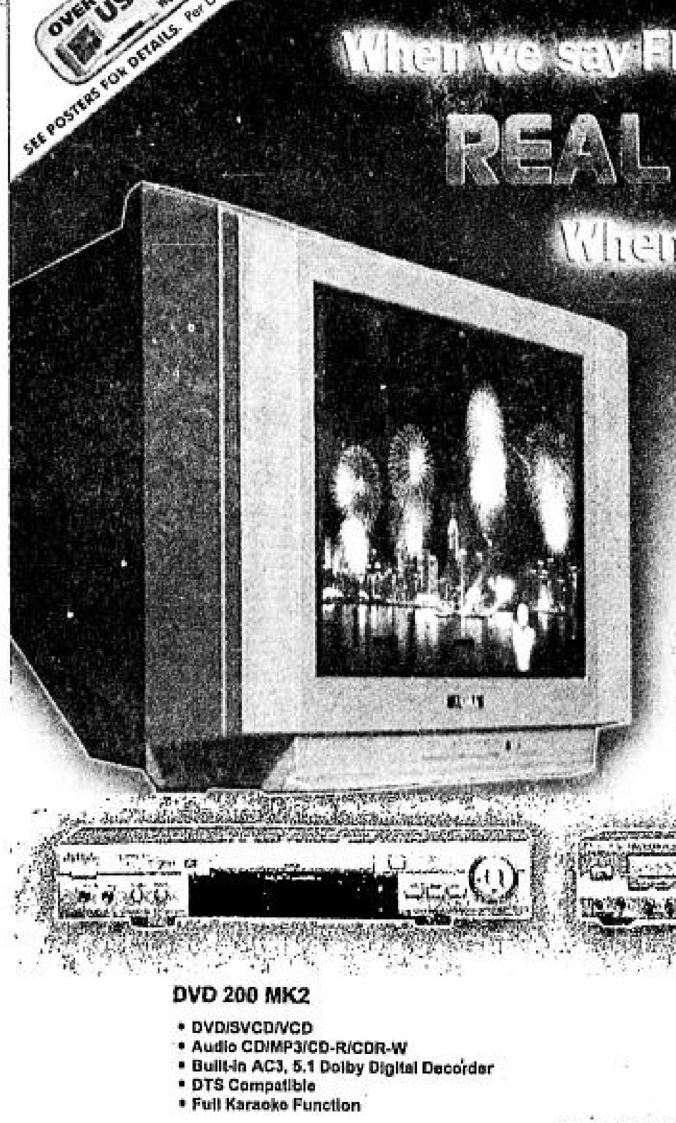

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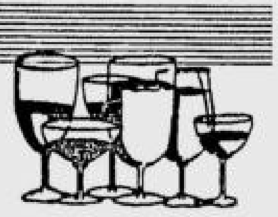


By Victor C. Agustin

THERE is another Gloria in the Office of the President that has become a de facto Cabinet and flagship projects auditor. And it is in her role as overseer that is making selected Cabinet members squirm.

We are referring to Gloria Tan-Climaco, the ex-SGV chair who has been appointed as presidential adviser on Special Projects.

Her functions include reviewing major government economic contracts that President Macapagal-Arroyo wants a second opinion on.

According to the pro-GMA grapevine, Tan-Climaco was first directed by GMA to review the controversial Piatco contract and that, impressed by her dissection specially in regard to how Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and Piatco's interests intersect, GMA subsequently gave her the official title.

This, despite the objection of taipan and staunch GMA supporter Alfonso Yuchengco Jr., who was said to have worked on Tan-Climaco's ouster from the venerable accounting/consultancy firm years ago.

AY, according to the grapevine, had been incensed upon learning that Tan-Climaco, then the principal auditor of the Yuchengco companies, was at the same time sitting on the board of competing companies.

Now we hear it is Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas, incidentally a friend of AY's, who has been burning the GMA lines to explain his objections to Tan-Climaco.

Apparently, GMA is set to remove Roxas from overseeing the controversial and long-delayed rehabilitation of National Steel Corp. and set to appoint the other Gloria in his stead.

Sleepless in Seattle

THE FAMILY of opposition battering ram Pacifico Marcelo must be spending sleepless nights, considering the kind of hole that he has thus far managed to dig himself into.

According to the grapevine, Marcelo's wife, Edith Macandog, is staying in the Seattle suburb of Mukilteo, along with son PJ (Pacifico Jaime) and two daughters.

The wife, who works in the accounting department of a Seattle firm, flew to Manila during Marcelo's and Erap's heydays just to check what seems to entice her husband to considering permanently relocating back to the Philippines.

She apparently missed the red Honda City that Marcelo bought and had been keeping in a certain Parañaque house whose renovation the generous Bicolano had even paid for.

Short takes

- JUST in case you missed it, ex-Censors chief Armida Siguion-Reyna ended her "Aawitan Kita" show Sunday night at GMA-7 with Erap's favorite tune, "Kahit na Magtiis," dedicating the song to you-know-who before proceeding to an inspired finale.
- SUPREME Court Justice Artemio Panganiban has a blockbuster that is waiting to be released, and it is a blow-by-blow account of the Edsa II deliberations of the Supreme Court that led to the installment of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the 14th Philippine president.

We understand that the manuscript has been finished.

Heard through the grapevine

THE CASH component in the Ayala Land buyout offer of Metro Pacific's stake in Bonifacio Land Corp. amounts to only P500 million, not $500 million as had been reported elsewhere.

The non-cash component is the 15.8-percent holdings in the Metro Rail project that Ayala had earlier offered to Metro Pacific, which the latter had also thumbed down. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

Gov't urged to maintain tariffs on finished goods

BUSINESS leaders called on the government to maintain present tariff rates on finished plastic products, citing the need to prevent mass layoffs if tariff cuts were implemented and lead to the closure of local companies.

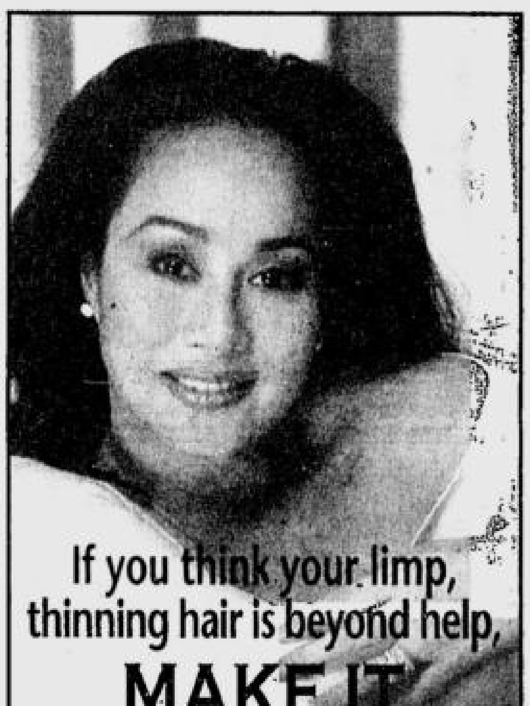
In a letter to National Economic Development Authority Director General Dante Canlas, Antonio Garcia and Raul Concepcion, president and chair of the Federation of Philippine Industries, made an urgent request to maintain current tariffs on a list of finished goods it furnished the Neda head.

The list included plastic products which are manufactured locally by petrochemical firms, an industry that is suffering from rampant smuggling and low tariffs for similar imported products.

"Import duties on finished products have been brought quite low, encouraging imports. At the same time, the cost of doing business has not been significantly reduced, handicapping the competitiveness of Philippine industry," Garcia and Concepcion said.

Garcia stressed that unless government acted favorably on the request of FPI, unemployment would increase as domestic industries face the imminent prospect of closure.

In the FPI letter to Canlas, the group, which counts among its members the country's leading industries, attached a list of 469 tariff lines, which it says was a "result of a long process of consultation among members and non-members of the federation."



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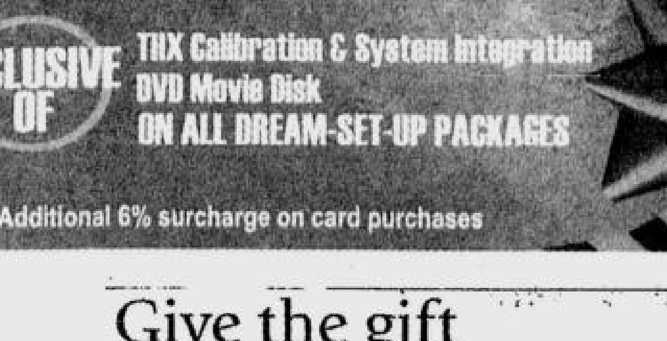

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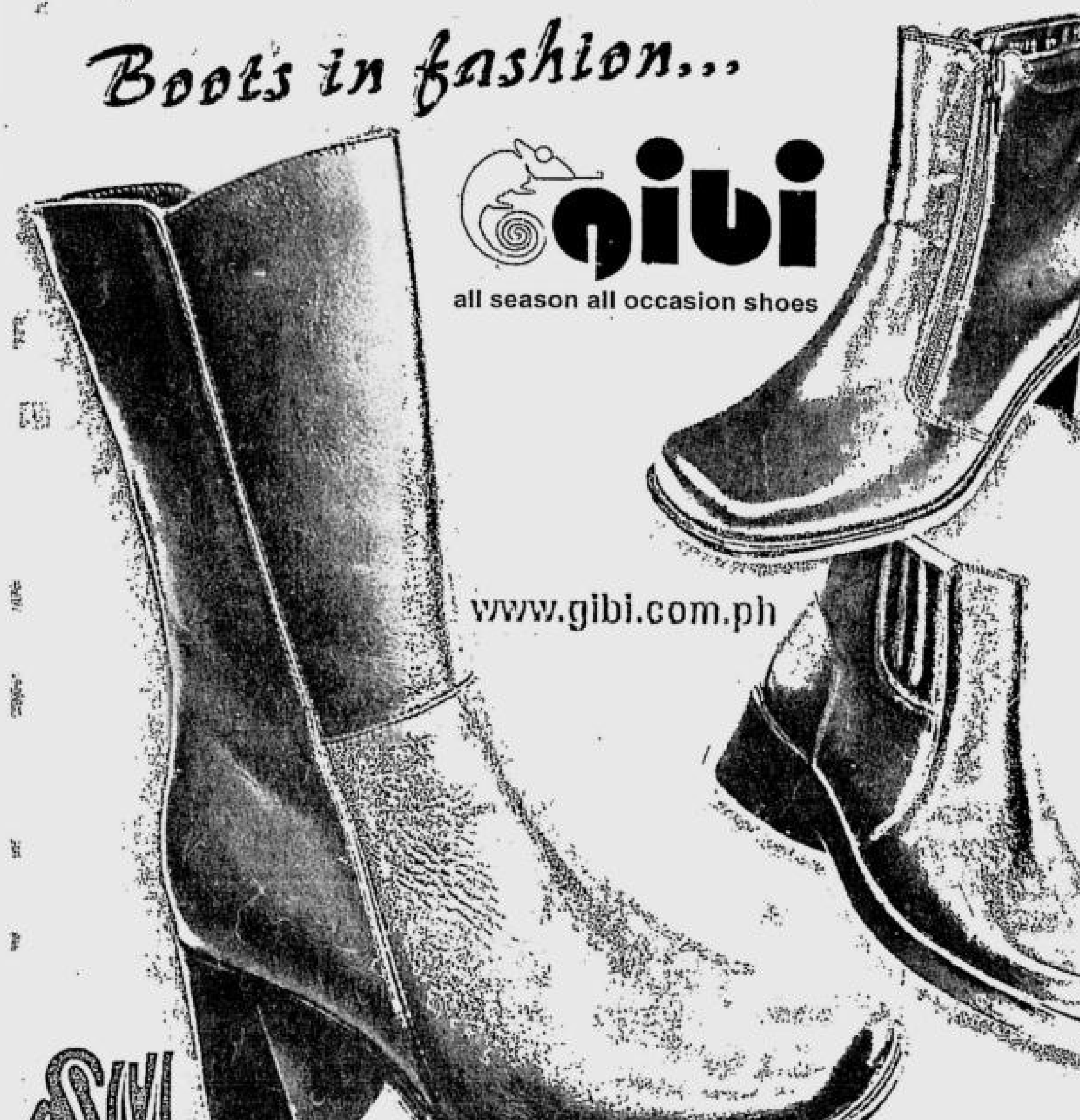
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BPI buys ₱400-M loan portfolio of private firm

By Elena R. Torrijos

BANK of the Philippine Islands, the country's second largest bank, has finalized the acquisition of a P400-million personal loan portfolio of a large corporation.

BPI executive vice president Aurelio Montinola III told reporters yesterday that the bank has practically closed the deal and the transaction would be executed next year.

"The large corporation has decided to outsource its personal loans and we're taking it over," Montinola said. He declined to identify the seller.

Last month, BPI president Xavier Loinaz said that the bank was talking to two large companies to acquire their loan portfolios consisting of salary or so-called personal loans.

On other possible acquisitions, Montinola said the BPI group would rest in the meantime while it absorbed recent acquisitions.

Montinola, who is also president of BPI Family Bank, said the thrift bank would have integrated DBS Bank Philippines by the first quarter of next year.

He added that the commercial bank license would be surrendered to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as a condition for the approval of the purchase.

BPI Family paid Development Bank of Singapore roughly P1.6 billion for a 100-percent stake in the local DBS unit.

Meanwhile, Montinola predicted that demand for loans would pick up next year provided interest rates would continue to fall.

"People will want to borrow and companies will want to get working capital to expand," Montinola said.

BPI posted a net income of P4.6 billion in the first nine months of the year, up 72 percent or P1.9 billion from P2.7 billion in the same period last year.

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CAP firms top industry in sales, trust funds

PRE-NEED firm College Assurance Plan (CAP) and sister company Comprehensive Annuity Plans and Pension Corp. (CAP Pension) led the industry in total gross sales and trust funds during the first nine months of 2001.

According to the latest report of the Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) non-traditional securities and instruments department, the top three sellers of education plans from January to September were CAP with P3.54 billion, Berkley International Corp. with P1.87 billion, and Philam Plans Inc with P1.79 billion. CAP has so far taken a 30.76-percent market share. Berkley International and Philam Plans accounted for 15.73 percent and 15.54 percent.

Meanwhile, the pension plan category's top three players from January to September were Philam Plans with P3.204 billion, CAP Pension with P2.319 billion and Pacific Plans Inc. with P2.004 billion.

To date, CAP and CAP Pension said their combined trust funds, or the amount set aside by the company to pay for maturing obligations, amount to P11.7 billion, the biggest in the preneed industry.

The trust fund is the prime indicator of a preneed company's strength and stability. CAP and CAP Pension said their trust funds were deposited in banks such as Allied Bank, Bank of Commerce, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Citibank, Equitable PCI Bank, Metrobank and Unionbank.

Global

(From page B1)

nomic Cooperation and Development in Paris.

"There is always this malaise around these turning points, while the pain of joblessness rises but surveys point to a stabilization," he said.

Confidence surveys like the US National Association of Purchasing Management have rebounded from the lows in the aftermath of Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

And the comment by the Fed, the first since that date indicating that conditions were stabilizing, encouraged hopes that the bottom of the downturn had been reached.

"I took the Fed statement and the tankan report to confirm that we are not too far from the bottom. The Fed is signaling for the first time that things are not getting any worse," said Eric Chaney, European economist at Morgan Stanley in London.

The December quarter tankan, which surveyed 8,647 companies between Nov. 8 and Dec. 11, produced a reading of minus 38 in its headline sentiment diffusion index (DI) for big manufacturers, its lowest since March 1999.

And in Washington, the Federal Open Market Committee said that "weakness in demand shows signs of abating, but those signs are preliminary and tentative," after cutting the Fed funds rate to 1.75 percent in its eleventh policy easing since January.

It went on to warn that risks remained weighted to the downside—leaving the door open for another cut if needed—and a plunge in US imports last month provided further evidence of economic weakness as the US current account deficit narrowed in the third quarter.

Reuters

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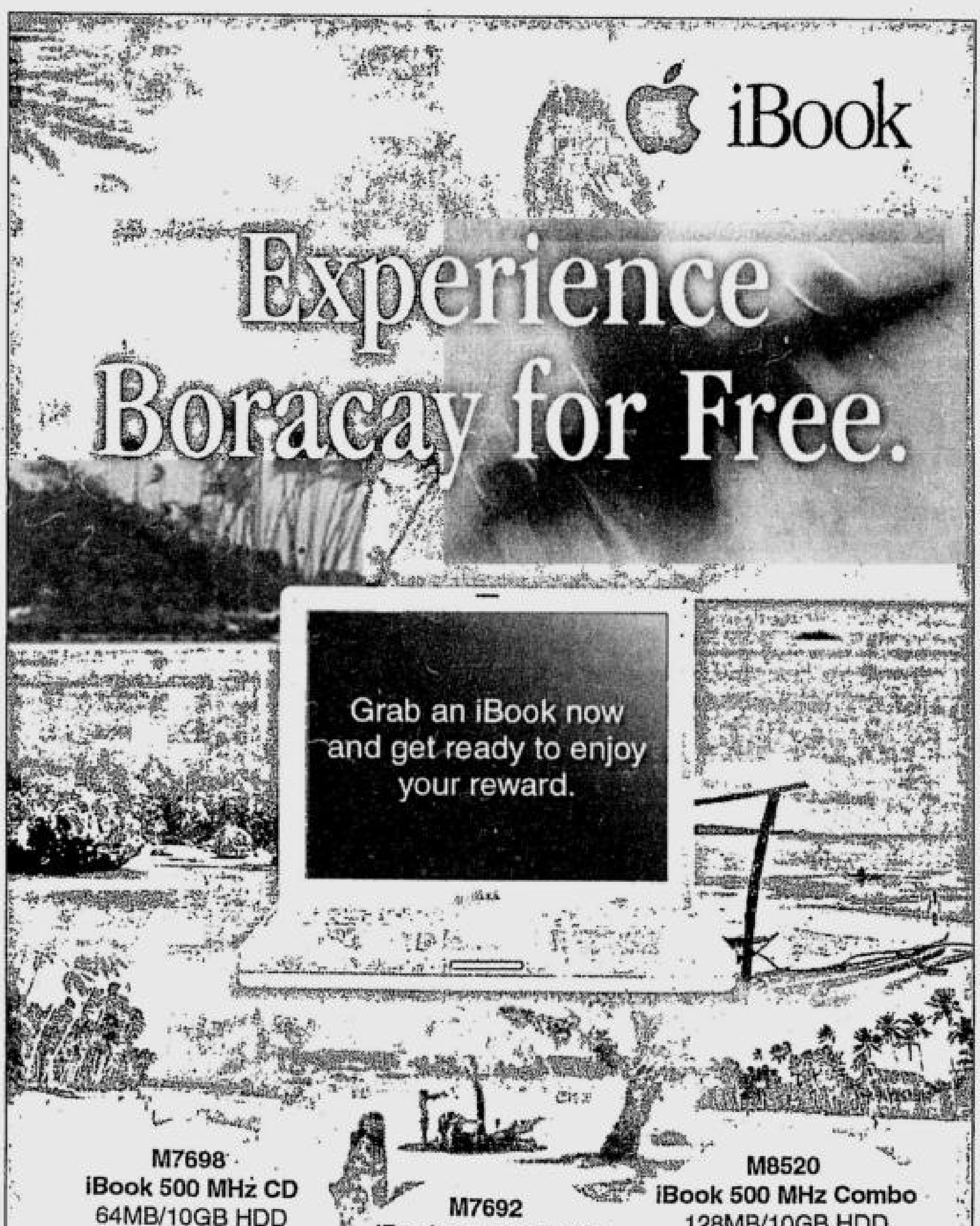
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PER DTI-NCR Permit No. 4278 Series of 2001.

RCBC sees 50% profit jump

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp., the banking arm of the Yuchengco group, is projecting a 50-percent jump in its net profits in 2002 to P667 million from around P444 million this year.

RCBC president Valentin Araneta yesterday disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the projected rise in net income was despite the additional P1.2 billion in loan-loss provisions to be put up next year.

The bank's projected net income will more than double the growth expectations for this year. For 2001, the target was to post a 20-percent growth from the P370 million net profit in 2000.

RCBC's projection assumed that the benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate would average 10.5 percent next year and the peso-dollar exchange rate would stabilize at 52 to $1. On the macroeconomic level, the assumption was that inflation would be at 6 percent and gross domestic product growth at 4.5 percent.

The bank expected interest income from loans to reach P7.5 billion next year, accounting for the bulk of its revenues, while investment securities and deposits would pump in P1.68 billion and P638 million, respectively. On the other hand, interest expense is expected to amount to P6.2 billion.

Meanwhile, the stock rights offering approved by RCBC would consist of 167 million new common shares at a par value of P10 each.

"The net proceeds of the pre-emptive rights offering, estimated to be P1.616 billion, will be used for the company's main line of business, which is lending," the disclosure said.

The offering will account for about 28 percent of the bank's subscribed shares after the fund-raising. The bank's outstanding shares, prior to the offering, stood at 432.96 million.

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Inflow of 'hot money' down

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

A SLIGHT drop in foreign portfolio investments in November has pushed down the net portfolio inflow in the first 11 months of the year to $43.2 million from the cumulative 10-month level of $51.8 million.

As of end November, the inflow of hot money reached $1.157 billion outpacing the outflow of funds that amounted to $1.114 billion, data furnished by five custodian banks to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

Despite an $8-million net outflow in November (from the $79.7 million in outflow and the inflow of $71.7 million), BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura is confident that foreign portfolio funds will start coming back to the local market next year.

"I believe we will have stronger portfolio investments next year, particularly in the fixed income market. Investments in the stock market, however, may not be as strong," said Buenaventura.

In the same period last year, investment outflow reached $3.003 billion versus an inflow of $2.854 billion leading to a net outflow of $177 million in the first 11 months of the year.

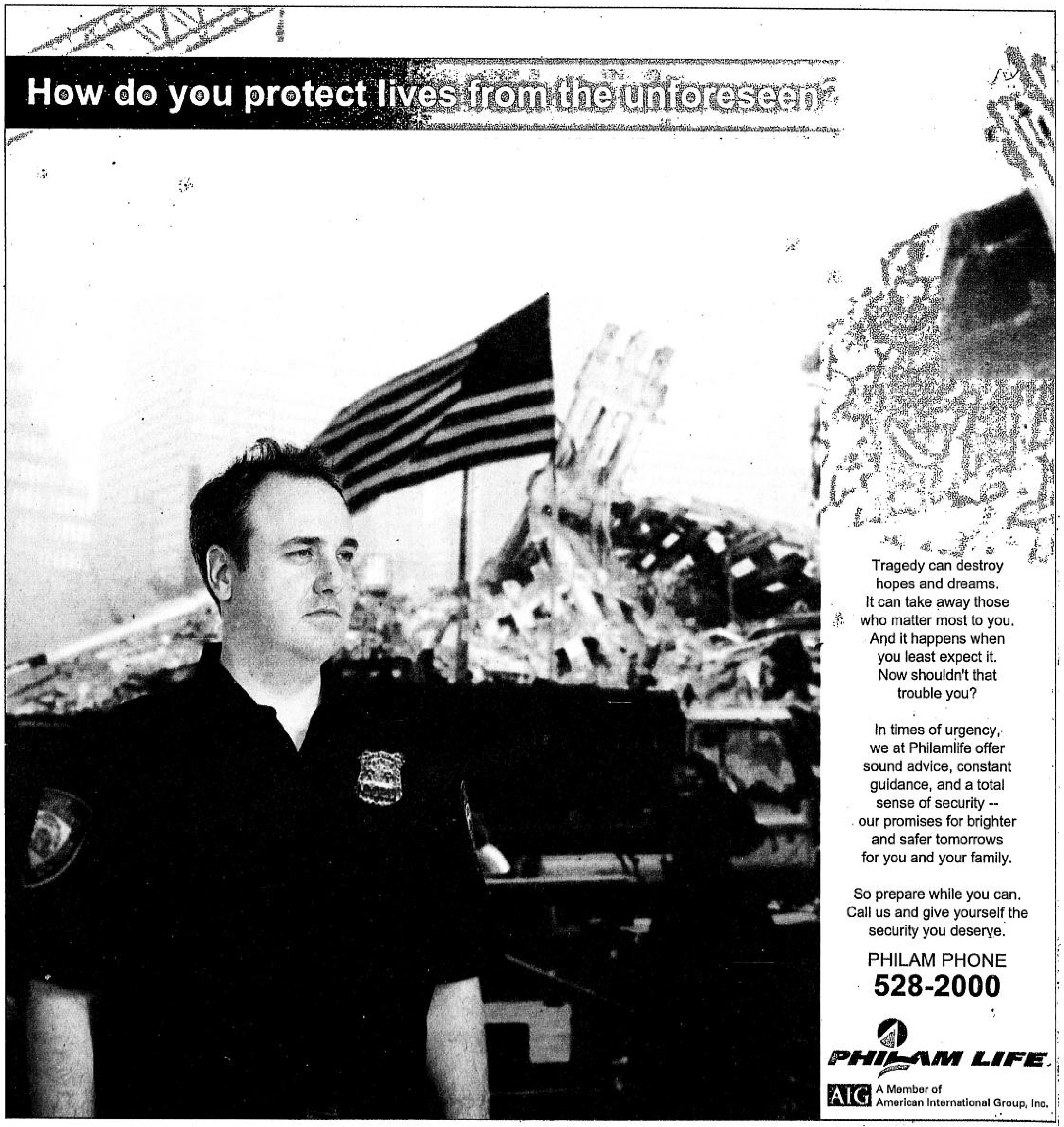
The drastic drop in portfolio funds last year was attributed by bank analysts to a knee-jerk reaction of foreign investors to the "juetengate" scandal that involved ousted President Estrada.

An analyst of a local bank explained that some portfolio managers have been hunting for select bargains in the local stock market especially when the Philippine Stock Market index dipped to a 10-year low.

At the same time, yields on longer-dated government debt notes increased in previous months although the increase has started to taper off in November.

Foreign portfolio investments refer to purchases by non-residents of stocks listed in the local stock market, government securities and money market instruments.

The BSP data was culled from the reports of HSBC, Standard Chartered Bank, Citibank, Deutsche Bank and ING Barings.



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News that makes a difference

Adviser tapped to evaluate NSC bids

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE TWO local investor groups—Cathay Pacific Steel Corp. and Allengoal Steel Fabrication Trading Co., that are keen on taking over National Steel Corp. on an interim basis, have asked for more time to submit documents to flesh out their respective offers.

This was revealed by the Department of Trade and Industry that also said it would tap a technical adviser to help the NSC evaluation committee assess the best offer on the table.

The prospective NSC bidders were supposed to submit all the pertinent documents on Dec. 10 but only Voest Alpine of Austria was able to meet the deadline. Capasco and Allengoal were allowed up to Dec. 19 to forward their documents.

The extension is expected to push back the NSC committee's self-imposed deadline to make its choice before the end of this year.

The committee requested Capasco to submit a monthly cash flow projection for the first year of operation and more detailed estimates of its rehabilitation cost and funding sources. Allengoal was asked to submit all of these data plus its long-term plan for the NSC plant after two years.

The DTI-led committee will tap an independent, highly respected and objective technical adviser for its review process. The DTI stressed that the adviser should have no direct or indirect links with any of the three bidders.

The NSC committee was formed in May this year to bid out a lease contract to reopen NSC on an interim basis while NSC's majority owner Hottick Investment-Renong, and creditor banks led by Philippine National Bank look for a mutually acceptable offer to take over the company.

Capasco is a major local steelmaker owned by Filipino-Chinese businessmen Benjamin Chua and John Ng. Voest Alpine used to control Semirara Coal Corp. Allengoal is a little-known steel trading firm owned by Cagayan de Oro businessman Alexander Delmo.

New MWSS chief named

By Christine A. Gaylican

MALACAÑANG has appointed former National Irrigation Administration deputy administrator Orlando C, Hondrade as new chief of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System replacing Jose F. Mabanta, an appointee of former President Joseph Estrada.

Hondrade, who has served the NIA for 26 years, becomes the fourth administrator of MWSS since it was privatized.

"Hondrade is facing a tough year since the coming year is a rate rebasing year. MWSS will also start implementing a series of water tariff adjustments and foreign currency adjustments next year," Freedom from Debt Coalition vice president Jude Esguerra said in an interview.

Esguerra said the new administrator should have the political will to balance the consumers' welfare and the private water companies' financial viability.

Under the administration of Mabanta, the MWSS allowed the revision this year of the concession agreements with Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co. Inc. to allow them to recover previous foreign exchange losses through water rate increases.

As MWSS chair, Hondrade will automatically become the vice chair of the MWSS board of trustees—the agency's policy-making body—whose chair is the incumbent secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Other members of the MWSS board, mostly presidential appointees, were also asked to submit their resignations.

In another development, DPWH Secretary Simeon Datumanong appointed Office of the Government Counsel lawyer Herman Cimafranca as the interim MWSS chief regulator replacing Efren Agustin, who was recently named head of the MWSS customer relations division.

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Insurance Age	Annual Premium in Pesos	Self Support Year*	Annual Premium in Pesos	Self Support Year*	Annual Premium in Pesos	Self Support Year*
18	6,100	15	8,900	15	11,700	15
20	6,335	15	9,253	15	12,170	15
25	6,925	14	10,138	14	13,350	14
30	7,935	14	11,653	13	15,370	13
35	8,955	13	13,183	13	17,410	13
40	11,090	14	16,385	13	21,680	13
45	13,305	14	19,708	14	26,110	14
50	17,400	16	25,850	16	34,300	16
55	21,955	16	32,683	16	43,410	16

* Note: Package includes Waiver of Premium (Female Rates) and Accident & Health (Twice Face Amount) riders

LIFE SHIELD DOLLAR 9/11

Lifetime Coverage	$10,000		$15,000		$25,000	
Insurance Age	Annual Premium in US Dollars	Self Support Year*	Annual Premium in US Dollars	Self Support Year*	Annual Premium in US Dollars	Self Support Year*
18	122.30	15	173.45	14	275.75	13
20	128.80	15	183.20	14	292.00	13
25	144.70	14	207.05	13	331.75	13
30	176.60	13	254.90	13	411.50	12
35	215.70	13	313.55	13	509.25	13
40	271.60	13	397.40	12	649.00	12
45	338.40	13	497.60	12	816.00	12
50	425.10	12	627.65	12	1,032.75	12
55	532.20	13	788.30	13	1,300.50	13

Note: Package includes the Waiver of Premium (Female Rates) rider.

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Surname	Given Name	Middle Name
Aliases	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Sex ○ Male ○ Female	Age	Height
Civil Status ○ Single ○ Married ○ Widow ○ Separated		Weight
Residence Address		Telephone No.
Business Address		Bus. Tel. No.
Specific Occupation and Duties		Annual Income
Relationship of Proposed Insured to Owner Payor *(if applicable)*		
PRODUCT NAME ○ Life Shield 9/11 ○ Life Shield Dollar 9/11 ○ Life Protect 9/11		
AMOUNT OF COVERAGE	RIDER *(if applicable)*	
Beneficiary's Name		Age

OWNER / PAYOR

Surname	Given Name	Middle Name
Aliases	Date of Birth	Place of Birth
Sex ○ Male ○ Female	Age	Height
Civil Status ○ Single ○ Married ○ Widow ○ Separated		Weight
Residence Address		Telephone No.
Business Address		Bus. Tel. No.
Specific Occupation and Duties		Annual Income
MODE OF PAYMENT ○ Annual ○ Semi-annual ○ Quarterly ○ MSA/BPS ○ SMPDC		
IN CASE OF PREMIUM DEFAULT ○ Premium Loan ○ Paid-up Insurance ○ Extended Term Insurance		
Relationship to P.I.	Name of Trustee (if beneficiary is below 18)	

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A. Has the Proposed Insured (PI) or Owner/Payor (O/P) ever been told that he has cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, heart trouble, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous disorder? (If "YES", underline which ailment or ailments).	☐Yes ☐No	☐Yes ☐No
B. Does the PI or O/P have any abnormality or impairment in his health or physical condition?	☐Yes ☐No	☐Yes ☐No
C. During the past 5 years, has the PI or O/P consulted any physician for medical treatment, or been confined in a hospital, clinic or similar institutions?	☐Yes ☐No	☐Yes ☐No
D. Does the PI or O/P engage in motorcycle / motorboat / auto racing, sky diving, scuba diving or other hazardous avocations?	☐Yes ☐No	☐Yes ☐No

For each "YES" answer to any of the questions above, please give full details in the space below. For questions A,B, & C, include physician's name and address, hospital, date and nature of consultation, sickness or impairment. Use an addendum form (FormGF7C) for additional answers and/or beneficiaries. Please don't forget to sign those additional forms.

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Owner's Signature ____________
Signed at ____________
Date Signed ____________
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'HOTSHOTS FLAME-GRILLED BURGERS'

Friends go on their own, stumble on hot idea

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SUCCESS STORY

IT was the third quarter of 1999, and three friends from the University of Asia and the Pacific were thinking of putting up their own business just to make an extra peso.

The economy was just recovering from the debilitating effects of the Asian currency crisis, so they felt the need to come up with a good business venture to earn money for themselves instead of depending on their income from their parents' businesses.

Carlo de Guzman and the husband-and-wife team of John and Anjie Decena started brainstorming and came up with all sorts of ideas. They thought about selling rice toppings, juices and smoothies and even the good-old favorites fish ball and barbecue.

They finally ended up organizing bazaars. It brought in good cash, but they were still looking for other business opportunities.

Opportunity knocks

The opportunity finally came when a friend of theirs offered space in Pearl Drive for them to set up a business. Their friend operated a billiard hall but did not want to sell food, so he invited them to provide the food.

Using the P200,000 that they raised from organizing bazaars, they immediately went headlong into constructing a food outlet along Pearl Drive.

"We took the space beside the billiard hall. What we wanted then was to sell sandwiches or barbecue and squidballs because it was relatively easy to sell. After all, none of us were food techies. It was also good that it was right in front of our school, so we knew the market. We knew what they wanted," the 31-year-old John, the eldest in the group, said.

The three friends, with the help of other friends and family, then started to formulate their own recipes for hamburgers. It was the easiest to make and sell, they thought, because Filipinos generally liked hamburgers.

"From October to December in 1999, we made and tasted different kinds of burgers, sometimes twice a day. We ate so many of our hamburgers that it was coming out of our ears," said 27-year-old Carlo.

"We consulted friends who were in the food business, and we asked them to taste our formulations. What we did was to mix and match what we thought was good advice so we came up with our own flavors for the hamburgers," added Anjie.

They did not realize that it took so long for them to come up with the perfect recipes for the hamburgers. In the meantime, they were paying rent on their space and were running out of funds.

"We only had the burgers. We did not have the pasta and the barbecue and the fish balls that we wanted to sell, but we were running out of time and money because Christmas break was coming and we would lose out on our market," John explained.

Biting the bullet

The three friends then decided to just bite the bullet and sell only the hamburgers that they managed to formulate. So exactly two years ago today, the first Hotshots Flame Grilled Burgers outlet opened along Pearl Drive.

Angie suggested the name Hotshots when John and Carlo could not agree on a name for their food outlet.

"She said why not Hotshot when you call each other that anyway. Like when I say that Carlo has a lot of admirers, I say, 'Wow, hotshot!' or Carlo says 'hotshot' when I score a lot of points in a basketball game, and it was catchy, so we said, 'Why not?'" John said.

They were proud to say that their parents, who had successful businesses of their own, did not even know that they were planning to put up a big outlet. What the outlet had, they put in from the bazaar earnings as well as their Christmas bonuses and additional savings. Even the refrigerator was one of John and Angie's wedding gifts.

John, Angie and Carlo gave away all the burgers they had for free that day just to test their system and the market response. It goes without saying that they immediately ran out of stock just four hours after they opened.

This made them very happy but, at the same time, not so convinced yet that they had a good product. After all, it was free. Thus, they were not as optimistic that sales would be the same the next day since the burgers were not free anymore.

The response, however, was the same.

The store was so busy, in fact, that Angie had to go back home in the middle of the afternoon just to bring back more of the hamburger patties. John, on the other hand, literally had to run to Megamall to get supplies.

Big break

"So we made our decision to stick to the burgers since people liked it. We also committed each other to not treat the business as a sideline anymore but a real business that we would grow," John said.

They were operating out of Pearl Drive for a year without any advertising or even streamers or flyers. They were able to develop a loyal customer base solely through word of mouth.

Among their customers were brothers Jaime Augusto and Fernando Zobel and their wives Lizzy and Kitkat.

"They ate on a weekend and we even felt bad for them because they were eating under the heat of the sun. That's why we were so surprised when, on the following Monday, we got a call from one of their people asking us if we wanted a space in Glorietta. We were so happy because we know that the waiting list for a space in Glorietta is very long, and we did not even apply," Anjie said.

The Glorietta outlet opened in January this year, and it was the first Hotshots franchise. It was quickly followed by the company store along Taft Avenue in Manila and along Jupiter Street in Makati. The latest addition is the Libis outlet, the second franchised outlet.

John, Angie and Carlo attributed the market response to the quality of the burger that they put out and the service that goes along with it.

"We have a principle in our business that we should always be honest with the product and with the customers. We should not shortchange the people who patronize our product. We believe that if you are honest then you cannot lose in this business," John said.

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HOT trio Carlo de Guzman (left), Angie and John Decena

JOHNNY VILLENA

PCIC chief sees gains under DOF

MALACAÑANG'S decision to transfer jurisdiction over the Philippine Crop Insurance Corp. from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Finance should speed up the disbursement of farmers' insurance claims, PCIC president Benito Estacio said yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has issued Executive Order No. 42 placing PCIC under the finance department.

Critics of the executive order have warned that placing PCIC under the DOF could delay the release of insurance claims as the finance department may impose additional requirements on those filing these claims.

Reacting to this warning, Estacio told the INQUIRER: "It would not hamper PCIC's mandate, I perceive that this move would benefit us and allow us to venture and insure both small- and medium-scale farm projects. The DOF may have a better grasp of the business that we do and aid us in securing our foreign re-insurers."

He added that PCIC would no longer be confined to insuring government projects or insuring rice and corn alone. It could expand its coverage to high-valued crops such as sugar cane, bananas, pineapples, tobacco and tomato, he said.

Estacio reported that over the last two decades, over P31.6 billion worth of insurance protection was extended to crops, livestock and other agricultural assets of about 3.5 billion farmer-beneficiaries.

Christine A. Gaylican

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AGGIE PINILI, Account Manager SPROJECTS@INQUIRER.COM.PH **ARIES B. ESPINOSA**, Assistant Editor

More value for money at the Christmas Lifestyle Expo

STILL searching for a place where you can have the best buys and best appliance deals in town?

Looking for sales exhibits where you can avail of reduced rates, lower prices, freebies, combo deals and additional offerings? Or where you can choose from a wide selection of top appliance brands?

Of course, 'tis the season to shop and save more in the process!

And there's no other place to do so this Christmas but at the ongoing Automatic Centre "Christmas Lifestyle Expo" in the Cyberzone Area, located at the 2nd level of SM Southmall.

The sales exhibit, which runs up to Dec. 23, features various home and audio-visual appliances.

Warranty Plus is a program that extends the manufacturer's full factory warranty from the standard one year to two, three up to five years

Whether it's the latest 48-inch projection TV or 29-inch flat screen TV, an elegant stainless steel refrigerator, that soak-matic washing machine, or that portable DVD player. Whatever appliance you fancy, what you've always been dreaming of can be yours.

You can choose from the country's top brands like JVC, Sharp, Philips, National, Panasonic, Aiwa, Pioneer, LG, Whirlpool, Frigidaire, La Germania, Hanabishi, Konka, Miyata and Changhong.

Or enjoy best buys like a VCD player with MP3 for as low as P2,398, a 21-inch color TV for as low as P6,999 or a VCD mini component for as low as P3,995. You can also avail of the ultimate combo deals by buying a 29-inch color TV and getting a VCD player for only P698 (original price: P2,550) or get instant bonus rebates of up to P1,000 on selected items.

What's more, you can enjoy your shopping without denting your wallet. Having a tight budget this season will no longer be a hassle because Automatic Centre has tied-up with all major credit cards so you can avail of reduced rates on installment purchases or get discounts and freebies on outright cash purchases.

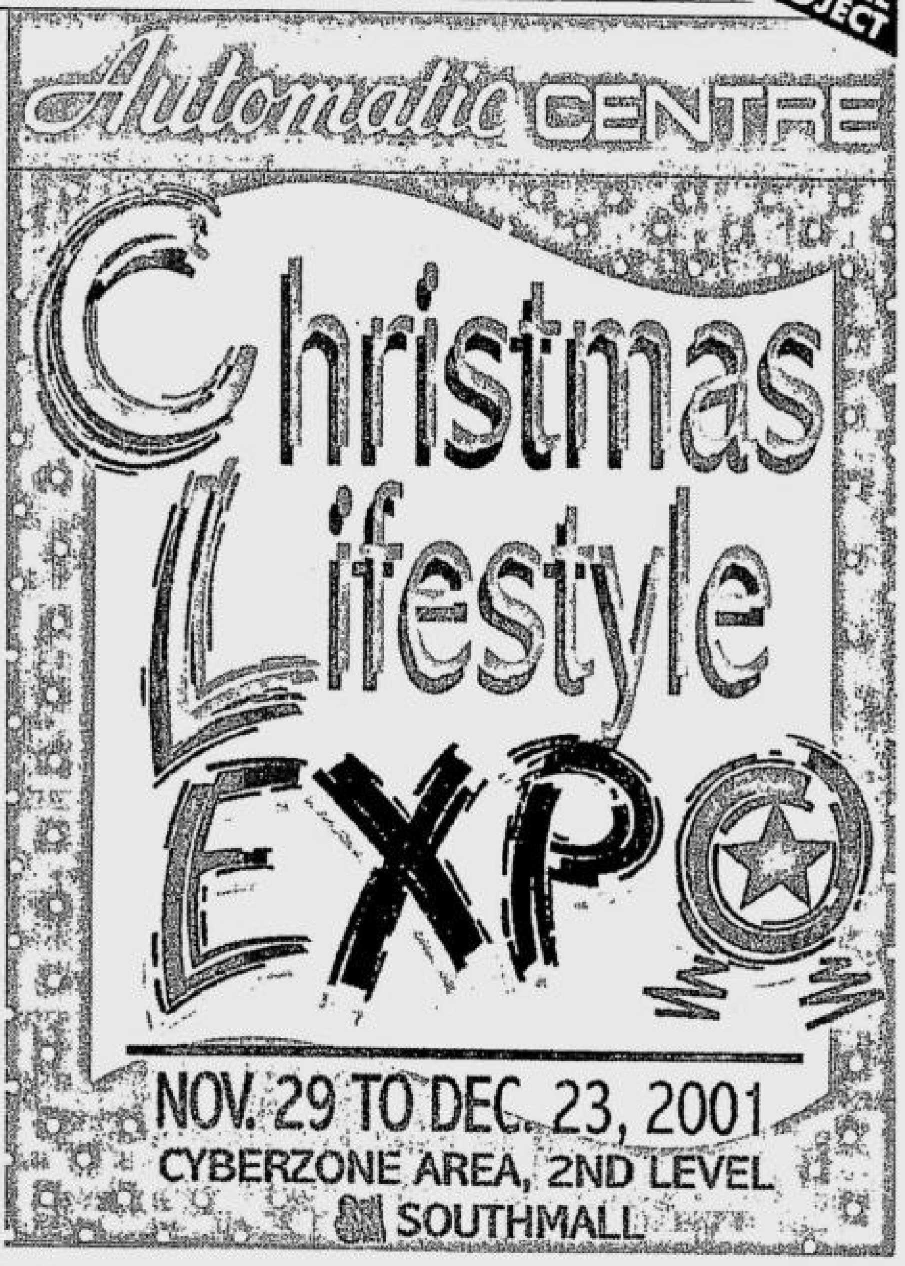
Buyers would also be amazed with the additional offerings by Automatic Centre—the Warranty Plus, wherein the customer has the option to extend the manufacturer's warranty up to five years for a low one-time fee or the Replacement Advantage offer on small appliances.

Warranty Plus is a program that extends the manufacturer's full factory warranty from the standard one year to two, three up to five years. By paying just a small amount (one-time payment), you get peace of mind from future service costs.

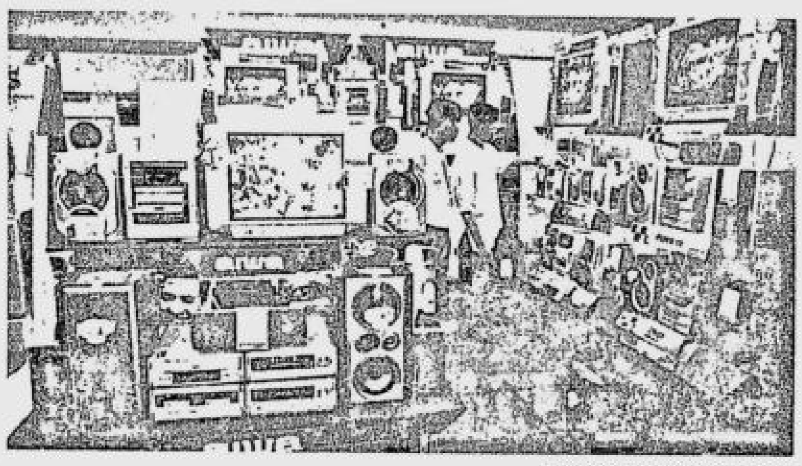
By calling the customer service hotline 754-3515, you will be provided with worry-and hassle-free service. This service is fully backed by Philam, assuring you of reliable service when you need it at no extra cost to you.

Warranty Plus is also transferable, which means that to whoever you sell or give your appliance to while it is covered by Warranty Plus, he or she will benefit from the Warranty Plus coverage. You simply inform the hotline about the change of ownership.

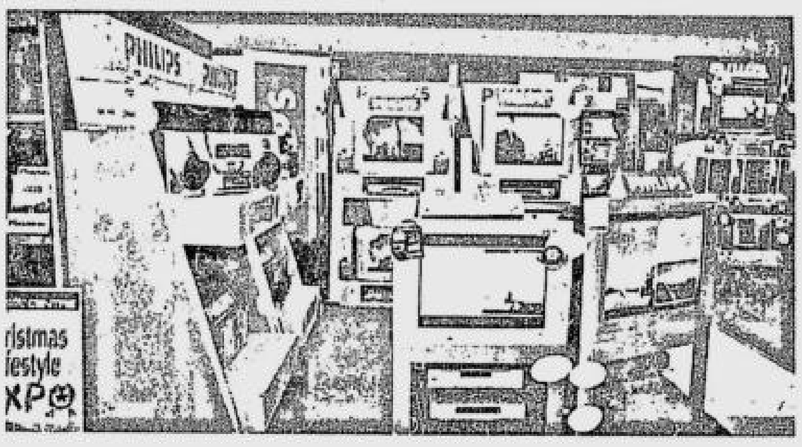
Automatic Centre also offers Replacement Advantage for the small appliances you buy. Replacement Advantage lets you replace the small appliance (no more servicing!) with a brand new one, after the manufacturer's warranty has expired, also for a very low one-time fee.



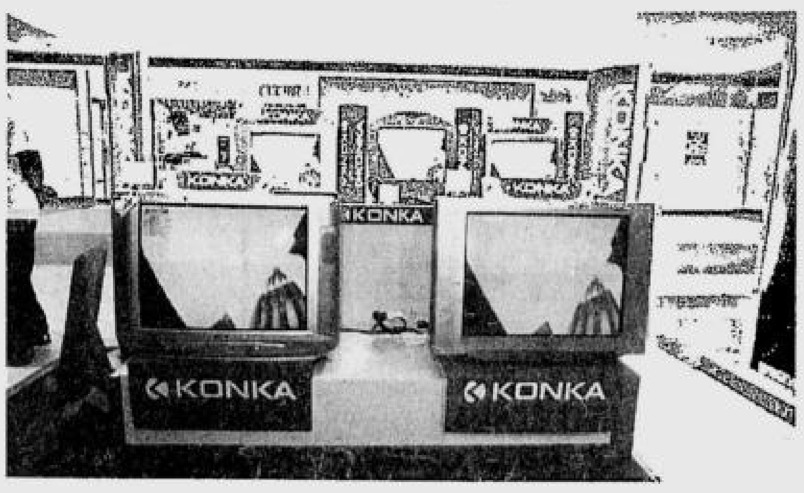
IT SEEMS Santa showcased all his best 'toys' in Las Pinas this Christmas. Where else can you find the latest and the best from such well-known brands as Aiwa, Philips, La Germania, Konka, Miyata, Panasonic, JVC, Whirlpool, Hanabishi, Sharp, LG, Pioneer, Changhong and Frigidaire? You don't need to wait for Santa to slide down the chimney to get your wish. Just go to SM Southmall, and everything you've wished for is right before your eyes.



PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON



LA GERMANIA
Automatic CENTRE
Christmas Lifestyle EXPO



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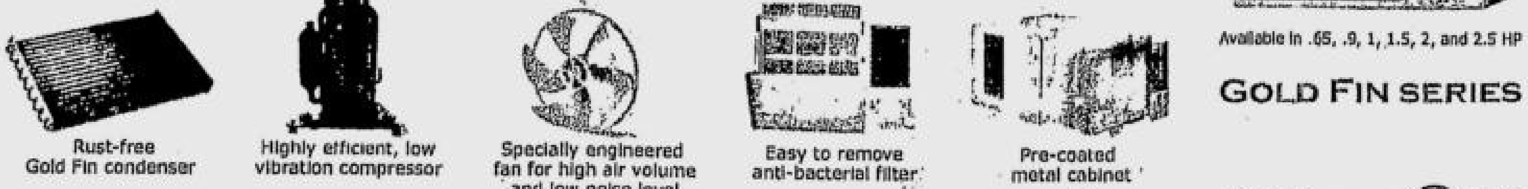
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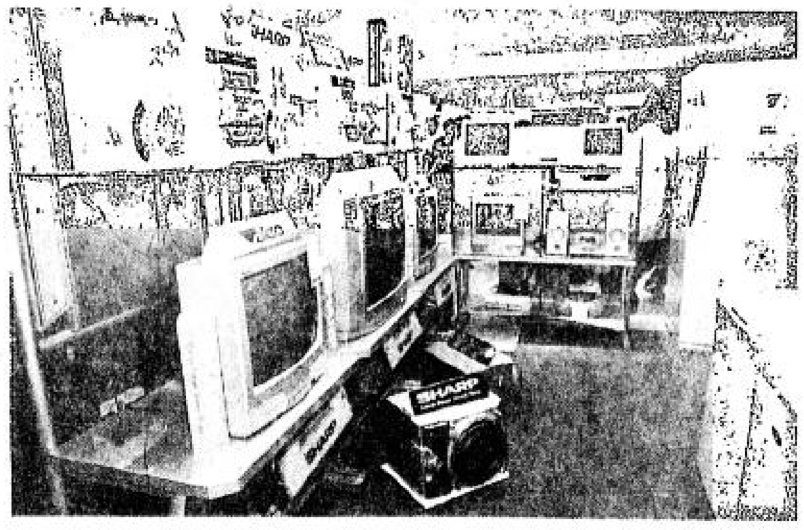

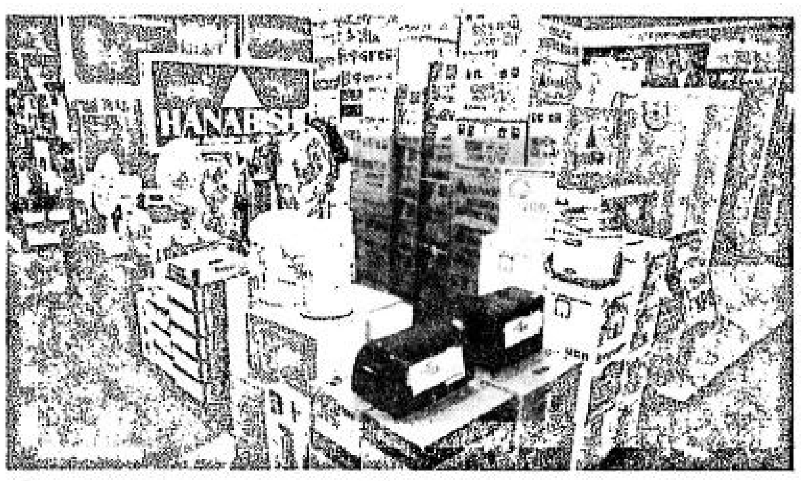

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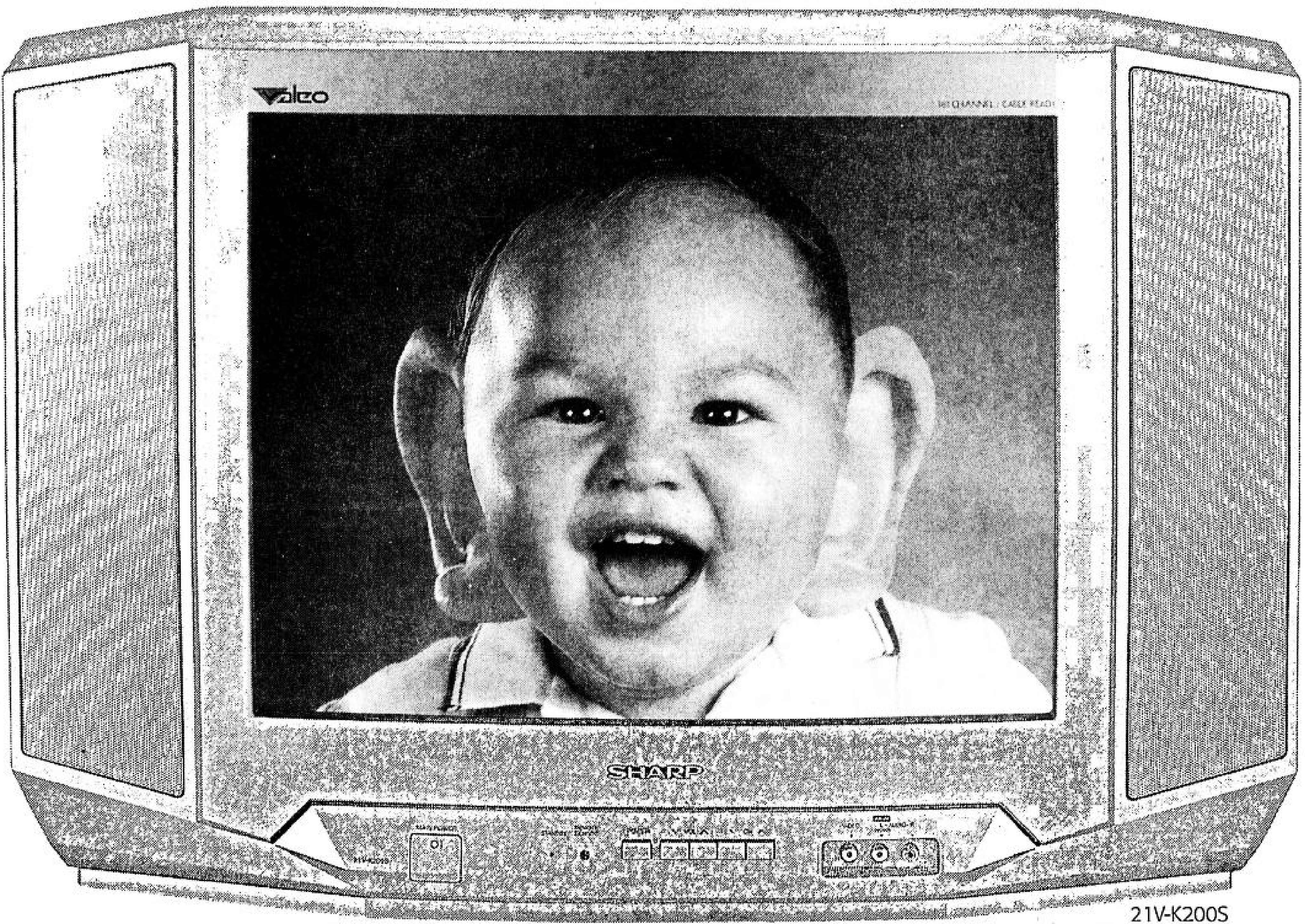

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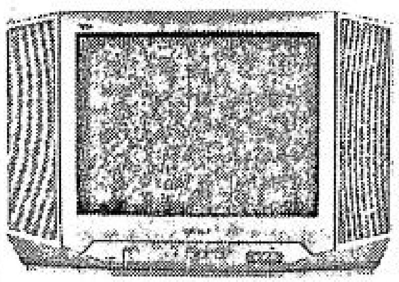

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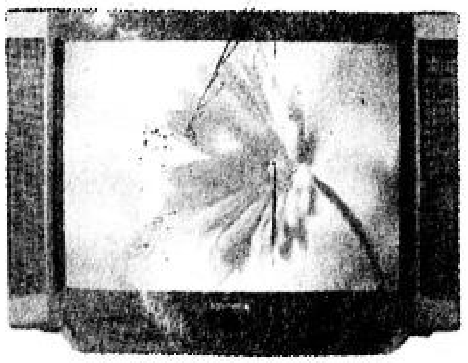

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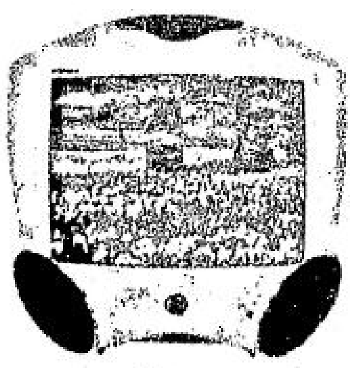

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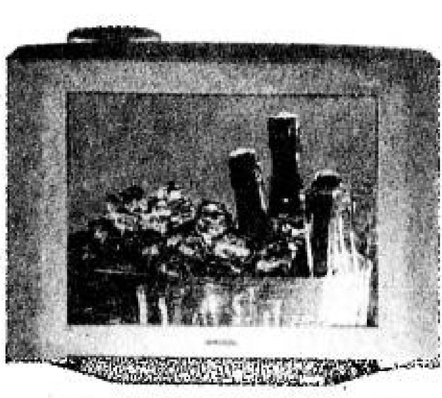

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As the government entity mandated to regulate all games of chance, PAGCOR only conducts its operations in the 13 Casino Filipino branches, in the Ronquillo slot machine arcade and in authorized bingo outlets throughout the country. We do not inform our patrons that they have won through text messages. Neither do we ask them to deposit money in a bank account nor tell them to purchase prepaid cellphone cards in exchange for claiming a prize.

PAGCOR will hold liable any person involved in this modus operandi for misrepresentation, swindling and intent to defraud. PAGCOR is presently coordinating with the Philippine National Police to pinpoint and arrest the guilty parties so the appropriate criminal charges can be filed. In the meantime, we ask the public to be vigilant and not fall prey to this cellphone scam.

NEW PAGCOR

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation

Responding through Responsible Gaming

Gloom and doom in the labor front

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

THE MESSIAH will come to us amidst a gloomy environment, with economic crisis bringing untold pains and sufferings to a great bulk of Filipinos.

We certainly don't want to dampen the spirit of Christmas. But the painful realities are right in front of us. After the Yuletide season, the Filipinos, especially the working class, are bound to be more affected by the harsh conditions of the economy.

There is doom and gloom in the labor front this year, and there is no indication that this bleak scenario is going to improve at all in 2002. We can't argue against the facts. Unemployment rate is rising, involving both our local workers and our OFWs. The agencies tasked to implement labor and employment programs are unable to minimize, much less reverse the trend of massive erosions of job security and real wages.

Massive unemployment

Statistics from the labor department reveal an alarming trend showing 400 workers being laid off daily in the first 10 months of 2001. That is about 110,080 unemployed breadwinners nationwide. That means more than 110,000 families without income.

Loss of jobs and income means no food for Noche Buena and Media Noche. It means being without new clothing for the season. Those who are renting their houses may be ejected by their landlords. It means children may have to quit schooling. It may mean foreclosure of mortgage. The sick may not be able to afford medical care. It means anguish for the poor. Thus, not even Christmas can make us forget even for a while, these growing difficulties.

Figures don't lie

Government figures indicate that 56,531 workers lost their jobs from January to October due to the closure of 2,294 local firms. This is expected to double when the November and December statistics are added up, considering that businesses usually close their books by end of the year and that they normally time their shutdowns then.

Aside from the 10-month figures on retrenchments, redundancies and closures, there were 54,549 other workers who were temporarily laid off by 526 establishments that embarked on job rotations, reduction of workdays and other cost saving measures.

Profiles of misery

The massive massacres of jobs are endemic and do not show any signs of let-up. On the contrary, there are signals of exacerbation in the coming year as many companies, moved by the spirit of Christmas, that postponed their closures and manpower reduction to next year after the Yuletide season.

The worst-hit sector of the economy is manufacturing that lost 33,320 workers in 10 months, or an average of more than 3,000 heads of families losing their means of livelihood every month, or 100 people driven daily to the streets to beg, steal or borrow.

Eroded real wages

The service sectors, including tourism-oriented firms such as hotels, restaurants, malls and places of entertainment, lost 21,383 in 10 months or more than 2,000 a month. Most of the job losses occurred in the National Capital Region, accounting for 52.9 percent while the Central Plains of Luzon lost 6,742.

The purchasing value of the workers' peso has been substantially eroded. The recent grant of a COLA to the NCR workers was simply a symbolic gesture by the equally beleaguered business sector, and a token manifestation of concern by a socially harassed and financially bankrupt government.

No safety nets

The workers have no adequate safety nets. When beset with diseases, injuries and disabilities now that they are out of jobs, the state insurance fund cannot cover them. The SSS cannot even do its basic duty of serving the employed, much less the unemployed.

There are no housing programs sufficient to make sure that those who will be ejected for non-payment of rentals will not be homeless this Christmas. There is no genuine medical coverage to make sure that the sick unemployed won't die without seeing a doctor or being administered the most basic medication. The poor will be left on their own. Now, I know why the baby Jesus had to be born in the manger inside a stable.

Precarious industrial peace

I am warning you that this peace around us this Christmas is fleeting. This can be the lull before the storm. I am also calling DOLE officials to review their benchmarks for industrial peace. They usually celebrate the lower number of strikes as indicators of industrial peace. With all due respect, this may be wrong.

"Non sequitur," we respectfully submit. Just because the workers are not picketing doesn't necessarily indicate harmony. Can there be a genuine industrial peace when there are a lot of injustices, a lot of violations of labor standards, many illegal dismissals, unabated unfair labor practices and union-busting, and corruption among those entrusted with the administration of labor justice?

In fairness, Secretary Pat Sto. Tomas and Chair Roy Señeres, along with Undersecretary Art Brion and Jong Olalia of NCMB, are like Don Quixote who are fighting windmills in a graft-ridden, inept and heavily demoralized bureaucracy. The majority of the officials and personnel are honest and dedicated, but the damage being inflicted by the few evil ones far outweigh the great services rendered by the faithful civil servants.

Justice still delayed

How long should a dismissed worker wait for a simple ruling in his suit for illegal dismissal? One year, two years? What would he be spending to defray his litigation expenses? How long will it take NLRC to dispose of his appeal? How long will it take the Court of Appeals to review the NLRC's ruling? What about the Supreme Court, considering its backlog? Can the worker wait for this long and winding process?

I don't want to go on griping a week before Christmas. But if the Lord should come, He may need to be born in our hearts. This is the time when we need Him most. Let there be a star of hope in this pervading atmosphere of gloom and doom. *(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)*

TURNAROUND IN 2002

PNOC Coal signs supply deal with Indon group

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

PNOC Coal Corp. recently inked a supply deal with Indonesian miners boosting hopes that the company will finally post profits next year after losing about P400 million in the past few years.

PNOC Coal president Florante Navarro said in an interview that the deal involved the 12-member companies of the Indonesian Coal Mining Association that would supply coal to the state-owned firm for trading.

The deal is similar to that earlier entered into by National Power Corp. and Icma.

"But our deal involves only half of the volume provided (in the Napocor-Icma) deal or up to a million tons per year," Navarro explained.

He added that the deal was expected to boost the firm's hopes of a turnaround starting next year.

"We are projecting profits of about P8 million next year, which is a welcome news after a P107-million net loss last year," Navarro said.

Also, PNOC Coal is pushing for the development next year of three new coal mines in Mindanao.

Navarro said the three projects have coal reserves of about 250 million tons.

"We can sell the produce from the mines as raw coal, or we can blend this with imported coal such as those coming from Indonesia," he said.

Navarro said that the firm's major markets for local coal included the cement manufacturing plants in Mindanao and in the Rizal province.

"We also hope to sell to Napocor for its power plants," he added.

The PNOC Coal chief said the supply coming from Icma members would enjoy a preferred pricing arrangement.

This means PNOC Coal will be able to avail itself of the supplies at prices lower than prevailing market rates.

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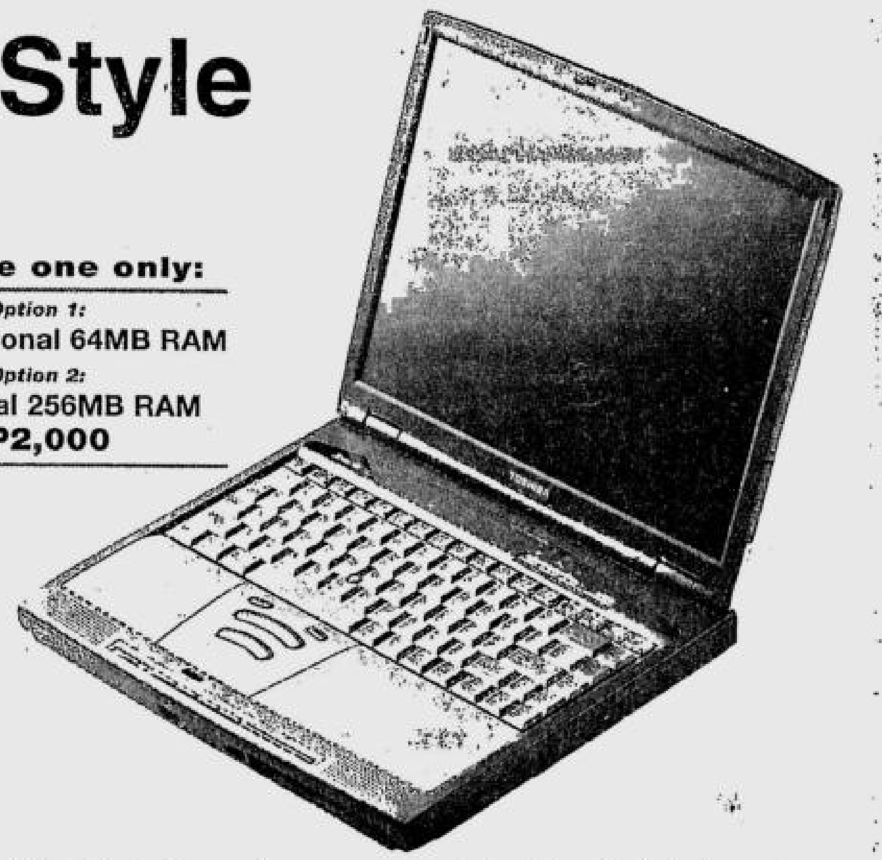

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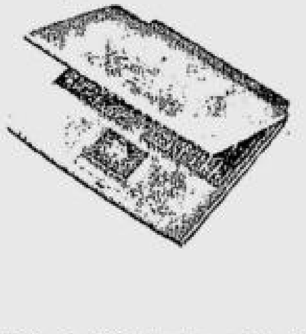

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Ayala retires $170M worth of debts as of end-November

By Doris C. Dumlao

AYALA Corp. has retired about $170 million worth of debts as of end-November using part of its P27 billion in cash hoard from retained earnings and proceeds from the sale of Pure Foods Corp.

Persons familiar with the matter yesterday told the INQUIRER that the retirement of these debts—a combination of fixed- and floating-rate loans contracted in 1996—had left Ayala, the country's biggest conglomerate, with $762 million in outstanding liabilities.

Ayala's next maturing debt amounting to $212 million will not be due until July next year. Company officials say that with its remaining balance, Ayala can easily pay off this debt.

Analysts say that with a steady revenue stream from its three core businesses—banking, property and telecommunications—Ayala's remaining debts will be manageable.

"We still have P27 billion in cash balance, so there's no need for refinancing," an Ayala official said.

On Wednesday, Ayala announced that it would offer to buy minority shares in three subsidiaries holding assets excluded from the sale of Pure Foods to San Miguel Corp. earlier this year.

In a disclosure, Ayala managing director and assistant corporate secretary Renato Marzan said Ayala would offer to buy shares held by minority stockholders in PFC Properties Inc., PF Prime Properties Inc and PFN Holdings Corp.

These companies are expected to be among the unlisted subsidiaries that Ayala will spin off into a new unit to make them more productive.

Ayala has mapped out a restructuring plan involving the creation of a new division that will find new and creative ways of unlocking value from non-core subsidiaries and investments. Former Energy Secretary Delfin Lazaro has been appointed head of the new unit.

The new unit will have possession of idle and non-strategic real estate. Analysts expect the soon-to-be-spun-off company to provide more management focus and help unload assets that are not shoveling enough revenue into the Ayala group.

Marzan said the left-over assets from the Pure Foods-San Miguel deal had been declared as property dividends to stockholders as of May 21 this year.

He said the tender offer was estimated to amount to P72 million or P20.96 per Pure Foods share held.

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HINT: Check out *Saturday Special section* on Saturday, December 15, for Inquirer's My Wish box.

DISCLOSURES

SAN Miguel Corp. will hold a briefing for its investors today, 4 p.m., at the executive dining room of its head office in Mandaluyong City.

* * *

RECORD date for **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.**'s pre-emptive rights offering is on Jan. 9, 2001. Proceeds of the offering, estimated to reach P1.62 billion, will be used for lending.

* * *

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank Corp. has denied having any intention of bidding for **First e-Bank**. Also, Frank Lin has resigned as director of the bank. Elected to replace him was Michael Chou.

* * *

CEBU Property Ventures and Development Corp. has changed the name of its development project in Cebu City from "Cebu Civic & Trade Center" to "Asiatown IT Park." Also, appointed chief operating officer of the company was Francis Monera.

* * *

SM Development Corp. has bought 2 million of its shares for P1.7 million.

* * *

FIRST Abacus Financial Holdings Corp. has announced the resignation of Miguel Tan as a director.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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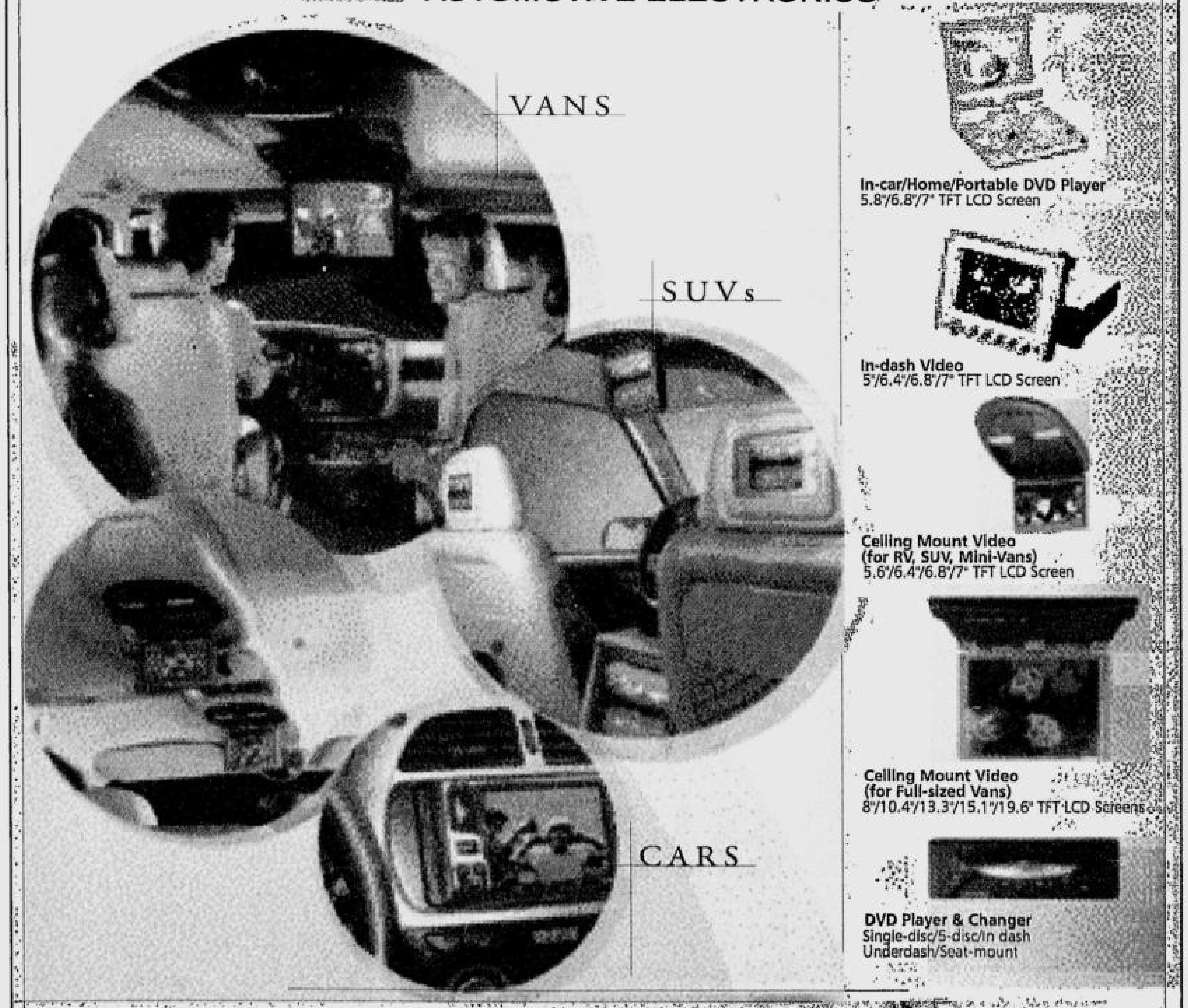
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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, December 13, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.70	4.7	4.7	4.7	3,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53	53	52.5	53	305,700
China Banking Corp.	580	580	580	580	200
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	18	18	18	18	10,900
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	22	22	21.75	22	893,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	178	179	176	176	38,590
Philippine National Bank	53	54	53	54	70,500
Security Bank Corp.	16	16	14.75	14.75	233,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	56,800
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	120,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.28	0.32	0.28	0.32	690,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1160	1170	1155	1165	27,980
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24.25	24.25	24.25	24.25	1,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.36	0.36	1,910,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	580	580	580	580	2,180
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.028	2,100,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	3	3.1	3	3.1	13,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	410	412.5	410	412.5	89,220
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.019	51,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	23.25	23.25	23	23	30,300
Manila Electric Co. B	31.5	31.5	30.5	30.5	668,800
Petron Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.54	1.54	4,898,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.88	1.92	1.88	1.9	1,190,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	11,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	70,000
Union Cement Corp.	1	1	1	1	5,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	164,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	6	6	6	6	102,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.5	12	11.5	12	11,300
RFM Corp.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	581,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	385,500
San Miguel Corp. B	50	50	49.5	49.5	219,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	5	5	5	5	5,000
Ayala Corp.	4.75	4.8	4.6	4.6	4,509,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	111,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.74	1,270,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	52,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	500
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	170,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.8	0.8	9,440,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	400,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.17	0.175	1,830,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	60,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26	26	26	26	149,800
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	3,010,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7	6.7	6.7	71,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	115,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	7,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.7	1,550,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	20,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.33	10,970,000
Music Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.37	0.37	13,530,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.38	0.35	0.37	680,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.19	0.17	0.19	640,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.27	0.3	260,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.78	400,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.5	36,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	1,330,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.51	660,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	24	24	1,611,200
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.56	1.56	1.48	1.5	483,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	74,000,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0055	0.006	0.005	0.0055	196,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.8	4.85	4.75	4.8	11,353,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.2250	.225	.22	.22	3,170,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	.3700	.37	.36	.36	1,770,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.2450	.245	.235	.24	3,980,000
EDSA Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.40	1.4	1.4	1.4	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.76	1.78	1.74	1.78	4,132,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	.2000	.2	.2	.2	140,000
SM Development Corp.	.8300	.85	.83	.85	2,200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.20	6.2	6.1	6.2	2,626,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	.3200	.32	.32	.32	220,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	.3200	.32	.32	.32	10,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	2.55	3	2.5	2.95	176,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines "A"	.0210	.021	.02	.02	12,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0036	.0036	.0036	.0036	10,000,000
Omico Corp.	.0032	.0032	.0032	.0032	20,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	.0160	.016	.015	.016	19,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. "A"	.2200	.22	.22	.22	120,000
Philex Mining Corp. "B"	.2450	.245	.245	.245	500,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. "A"	.0055	.0055	.0055	.0055	75,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. "B"	.0055	.006	.0055	.006	23,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	2,450,470	83,878,815.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	439,769,900	188,540,075.00
PRO	29,701,000	82,276,940.00
Mining	62,306,000	1,250,500.00
OIL	98,000,000	547,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	632,227,370	356,493,330.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	447.79	DOWN 0.35
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,533.23	DOWN 16.07
PRO	496.88	DOWN 2.40
Mining	1,021.85	DOWN 9.84
OIL	1.90	UP 0.04
All Shares Index	693.40	DOWN 2.82
Composite	1,108.62	DOWN 7.94

NO. OF ADVANCES: 15; NO. OF DECLINES: 42; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 29; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 86; NO. OF TRADES: 2,121

CURRENCIES

Dec. 13, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.112718	1.000000	51.9720
Japan	Yen	0.008837	0.007942	0.4128
United Kingdom	Pound	1.609547	1.446500	75.1775
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.142665	0.128213	6.6635
Switzerland	Franc	0.677743	0.609088	31.6555
Canada	Dollar	0.710549	0.638570	33.1878
Singapore	Dollar	0.608375	0.546747	28.4155
Australia	Dollar	0.578336	0.519751	27.0125
Bahrain	Dinar	2.951665	2.652661	137.8641
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.296709	0.266652	13.8584
Brunei	Dollar	0.606055	0.544662	28.3072
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000111	0.000100	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.025475	0.022894	1.1898
UAE	Dirham	0.303028	0.272331	14.1536
Korea	Won	0.000880	0.000791	0.0411
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.898700	46.7072
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.459498	23.8810
France	Franc	0.152450	0.137006	7.1205
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.407812	21.1948
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.065311	3.3943
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022278	1.1578
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000464	0.0241
Finland	Markka	0.168187	0.151150	7.8556
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004483	0.2330
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005401	0.2807
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022278	1.1578
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.141114	59.3060

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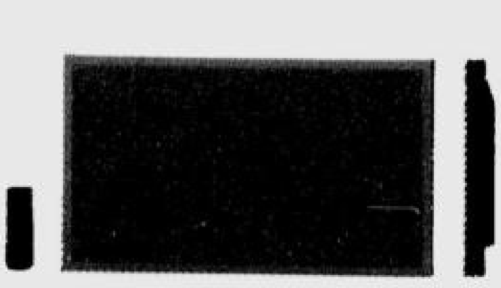

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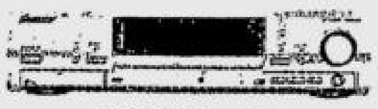

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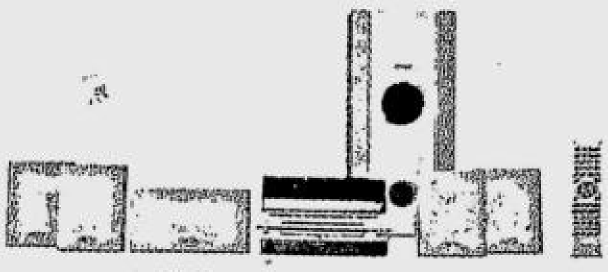

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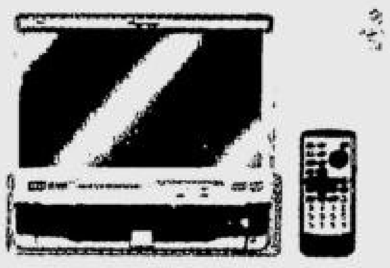

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Global growth up next year, says EIU

LONDON—The global economy will eke out 1.4 percent growth in 2002 and US real interest rates will stay negative in the first half of the year, a survey released on Thursday said.

The annual "country by country" report from the London-based Economist Intelligence Unit surveyed more than 180 nations. It forecast that after global economic growth estimated at 1.2 percent in 2001, the world economy will be weighed down by falling growth in North America.

The figures compare with global growth in 2000 of 3.9 percent.

North America will witness annual growth of 0.9 percent in 2002, the slowest region, down from 1.1 percent estimated for 2001, the EIU said.

The US economy, the world's largest, will be mostly to blame, with growth forecast at just 0.9 percent in 2002.

The US will share a place as the 11th-slowest growing economy with Germany and Switzerland, also recording the same sluggish growth. The US will continue to ease interest rates into 2002, the survey said.

The world's second-largest economy, Japan, was forecast to record a decline of 1.1 percent in 2002, making it the world's third slowest-growing economy behind Zimbabwe, down 5.0 percent, and Argentina, down 1.7 percent.

But Latin America as a whole will see growth jump by 1.5 percent from an estimated low base of 0.5 percent this year, although none of its contributing economies made it into the top 20 league of growing economies.

Asia and Australasia will rebound from 0.9 percent growth to 1.4 percent in 2002, while sub-Saharan Africa will grow by 3.6 percent, rising from 2.8 percent this year.

Equatorial Guinea will be the fastest growing country for the second successive year, thanks to expansion of its oil industry.

The Middle East and north African region will see 2.4-percent growth, up from 2.3 percent this year, the survey said, with Iraq and Sudan leading the gains.

Oil exporters Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates will be harder hit by efforts to curb oil production. *Reuters*

Asia seen to be building up excessive foreign reserves

MANILA—Asia is piling up excessive foreign reserves to cushion itself from another financial crisis instead of using the funds to fuel capital markets and spur much-needed economic growth, analysts warn.

Foreign exchange reserves held by East Asian economies now total as much as $900 billion, more than seven times the amount of foreign private capital that flowed out during the 1997-1998 financial turmoil in the region, according to studies.

"Enough is enough, the Asian governments and central banks should not keep building anymore reserves," Gregory Fager, Asia-Pacific director of US-based Institute of International Finance Inc. told AFP on the sidelines of a regional meeting in Manila where the rising level of Asian reserves was hotly debated.

The reserves, instead of being locked up as savings in banks, "could be put to better use," like investing in long-term bonds or stock markets and reducing debt, he said.

Asia, Fager said, also enjoyed a "fairly strong" balance of payments position which required less reserves back-up. Balance of payments captures the trade balance and investment flows of a country.

"The Asian central banks and governments believe the reserves demonstrate confidence but the problem is this is only a one-way thing," he said, suggesting that it was futile building up a war chest against vibrant markets.

"Now that the Asian crisis is over, there is no need to continually prepare for another crisis—and I think that's what many governments and central governments are doing," said Fager, whose institute groups the world's financial organizations.

Asian countries started beefing up their reserves after the 1997-1998 financial crisis sparked by a meltdown of currencies. The crisis was largely blamed by governments on excessive foreign exchange speculation.

Japan, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea are among the top five Asian nations in terms of foreign exchange reserves. *AFP*

Japan economy to dip 1%–IMF

TOKYO—The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects Japan's economy to contract by around one percent in calendar 2001 and shrink again the year after, suggesting Japan could be facing its longest recession since World War II.

Although the IMF will publish its updated global forecasts next week, a senior IMF official made the preliminary forecast on Thursday during an interview with Reuters.

"I would say it would be around minus one percent," said Kunio Saito, director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific region. "Any revision would be minimal."

Saito said he personally believed Japan's economy would bottom out in the latter half of 2002 when the global economy hits bottom in the second half of next year.

Japan, the world's No. 2 economy, last week confirmed its second recession in three years when the economy shrunk for a second straight quarter in the three months to September.

The United States, the world's biggest economy, is already in recession. Europe's biggest, Germany, is widely expected to follow.

The IMF will release an updated version of its World Economic Outlook on Dec. 18. In November, it forecast the Japanese economy was headed for a contraction of 0.9 percent in 2001.

Saito said the IMF would continue to predict another year of negative growth in Japan for 2002. It currently expects the economy to contract by 1.3 percent next year.

Saito urged the Bank of Japan (BOJ) to avoid trying to weaken the yen through monetary policy, adding that he believed Japanese authorities including the Ministry of Finance were not willing to take that step.

Asked about the possibility that the Bank of Japan would buy foreign bonds as a monetary policy tool, Saito said: "If the BOJ bought foreign bonds, that would enter the realm of external reserves and under Japan's current framework that would be difficult."

With short-term interest rates already at virtually zero, some, including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, have called for radical easing steps including purchases of foreign bonds, namely US Treasuries, to boost liquidity and effectively weaken the yen.

But Saito said that yen weakness as a result of the BOJ's current quantitative easing stance would be favorable because it would help support the ailing economy.

Saito said he believed it was important for the BOJ to specify a timeframe for eliminating deflation, and the central bank could consider adopting an inflation target.

"The central bank needs to send a strong message when deflation will end and what they will do to end it," he said.

Financial sector assessment

The IMF has initiated a review of Japan's financial system, and the assessment will probably take longer than the average seven to eight months, Saito said.

"The published seven to eight months is for medium-sized countries. It's the first for a big country and it will take longer but we have no idea how long our operations would take," he said. *Reuters*

Argentines take to streets as economic crisis deepens

BUENOS AIRES—Thousands took to the streets of Buenos Aires Wednesday to protest government austerity measures as officials said they did not have enough funds to make pension payments this week.

Several thousand protesters—3,500 according to police—demonstrated in downtown Buenos Aires, heeding a call from a branch group of the mainstream CGT labor federation, urging a solution to the economic crisis that has plagued Argentina.

"The country is in chaos," said Hugo Moyano, leader of the break-off CGT faction, demanding the resignation of Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo. Moyano echoed calls made by official CGT leader Rodolfo Daer for Cavallo to step down.

Cavallo and President Fernando de la Rua have worked to institute austerity measures aimed at staving off default on Argentina's massive $132-billion public debt and bringing the country out of nearly four years of recession.

Earlier in the day, demonstrators honked horns and banged on pots and pans in a noisy protest organized by a shopkeepers association, which is claiming that new limits on bank withdrawals—aimed at preventing a run on the currency—have led to a downturn in business of 40 to 70 percent.

Protesters marched toward the Plaza de Mayo, near the government seat, to show their discontent with the new economic measures aimed at balancing the budget to secure additional aid from the International Monetary Fund.

"Cavallo must go immediately," said Osvaldo Cornide, leader of the CAME merchants' organization.

A separate group of retirees maintained a protest for a second day at the headquarters of the agency that manages retiree benefits.

"Argentina is a rich country, we have everything, meat, land . . . but the government is killing it," said one protester.

The protests came a day ahead of a general strike called by the three main labor organizations in Argentina.

The economic crisis deepened as the government said it had delayed pension payments to some 1.4 million retirees, due to a lack of funds in the Treasury. *AFP*

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Dec. 16: 10am - 5 short films; 12nn- Choori (Iran); 2pm- Little Kids (Austria); 4pm- Blinker; 6pm- Man of Steel (Belgium); 8pm- Man ot Steel
Dec.17: 10am- 5 shorts; 12nn- Blinker (Belgium); 2pm- Man of Steel (Belgium); 4pm- Little Kids, Big Trouble (Austria); 6pm- Choori (Iran); 8pm- Choori

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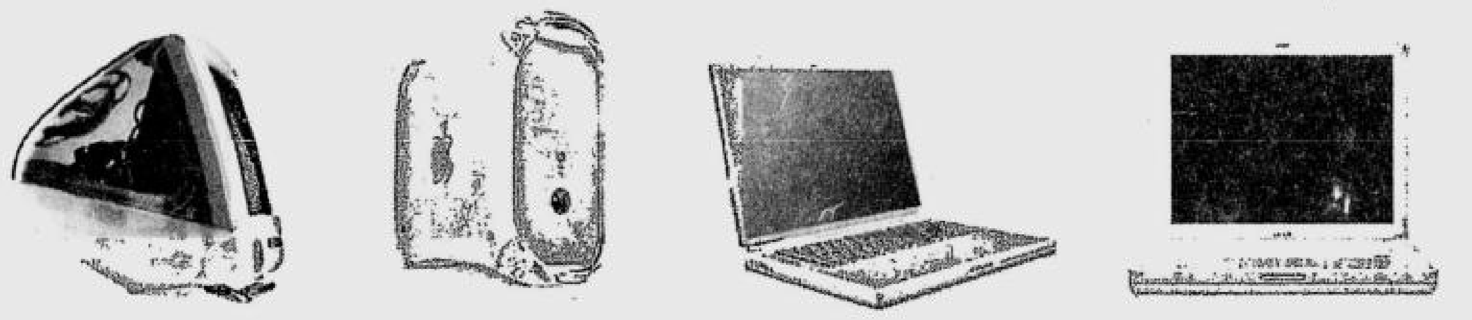

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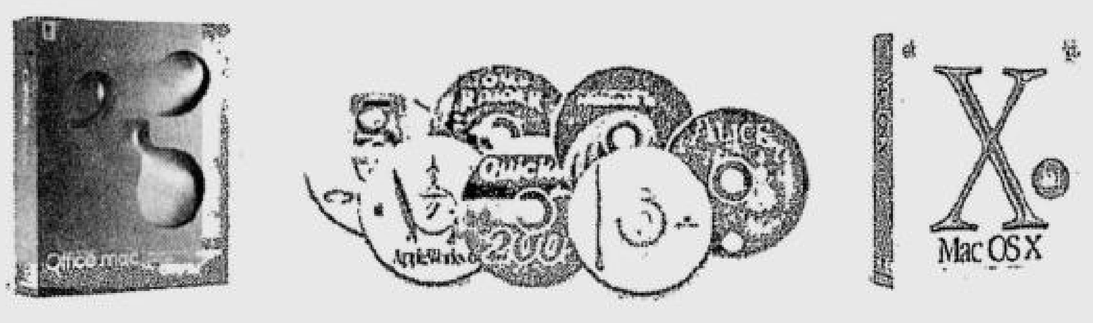

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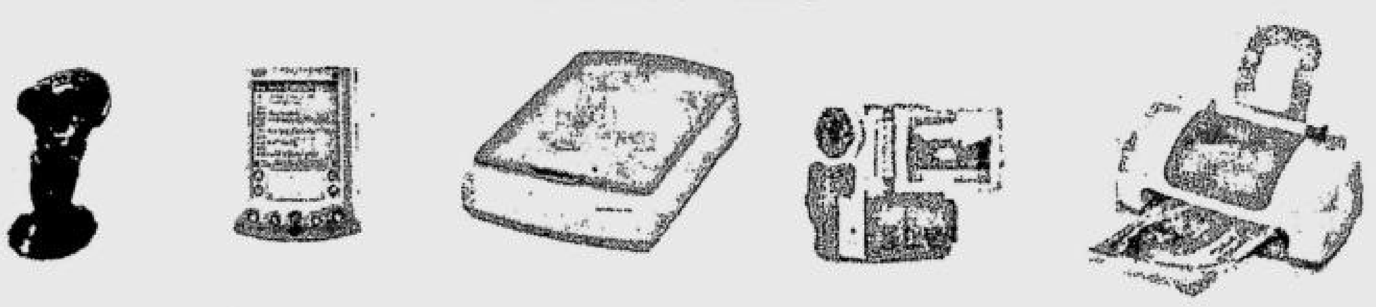

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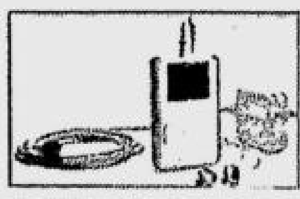

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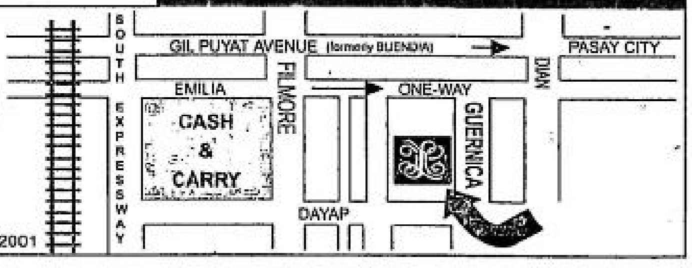
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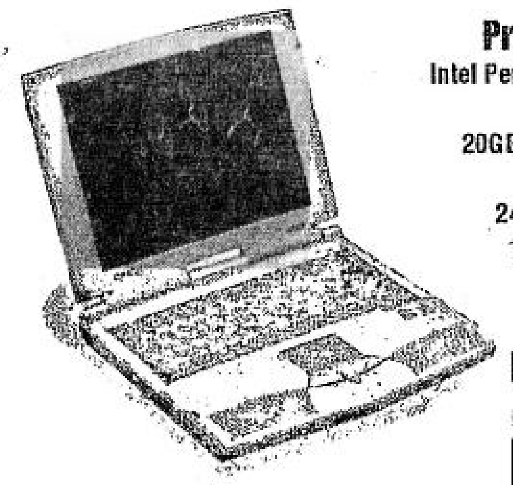

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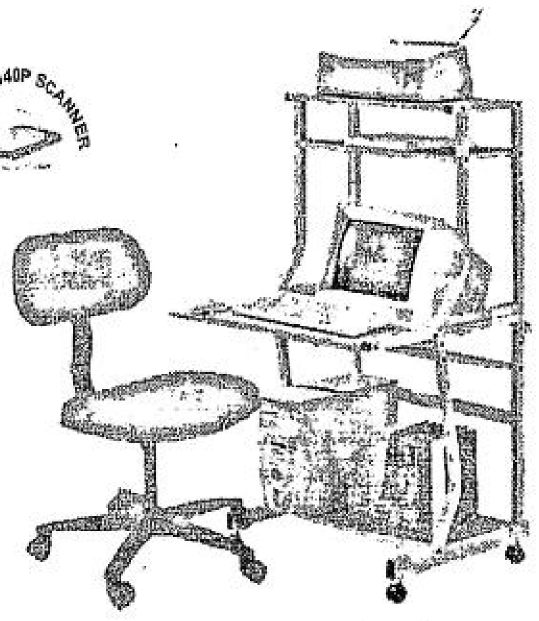

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LEGAL NOTICE

The heirs of the late **JUAN A. SARMIENTO** have executed a deed of extrajudicial partition w/ waiver of rights of his estate before Notary Public Patricio Boncayao Jr. of Muntinlupa City under Doc. 304; Page 62; Book 49; Series of 2001.
(PDI-Dec. 7, 14 & 21, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late BERNABE G. REYES at Meralco Employees Savings and Loan Association ("MESALA") Account Capital Contribution and Savings Deposit has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs w/ waiver as per Doc#301 Page#62 Book# II, Series of 2001 by notary public Rommel L. Yap of Pasig City PDI 12/14,21,28,2001

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that Stock Cert. MERALCO A 149321, 230985, 402437, 501868, 575244, 541462, SMC A 01638219, 01616080, 99601147, 97502176, 96400892, 95297281, 94172868, PETRON A 282429,745782, 1253705, 1469640, under the name of Edna T. Mastrili ; ABS-CBN A 87473, SELECTA A 37457, PETRON A 145933, 745783, 1253706, 1469641, ROCKWELL 0088 under the name of Ronaldo P. Mastrili PETRON A 282428, under the of Norma Terencio If no contest is received new Cert. will be issued. (PDI-Dec. 13, 20 & 27 2001)

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In this regard, we would like to inform you that for the remaining days of December 2001 up to January 15, 2002, we will be busy with the installations and adjustment activities as we transfer the facilities of our Information Technology Group (ITG) to its new office location at Unit 1709, 17/F Jollibee Plaza, Ortigas, Pasig City. Simultaneously, our NCR operations and Rise Finance and Management Corporation will be setting up office at the 8/F, Penthouse of Noah's Arc Building, Escolta, Binondo.

There will be a slight disorder as we engage ourselves with these improvements and adjustment activities. We, therefore, beg for your patience and kind understanding for all the inconveniences you may encounter during the said period.

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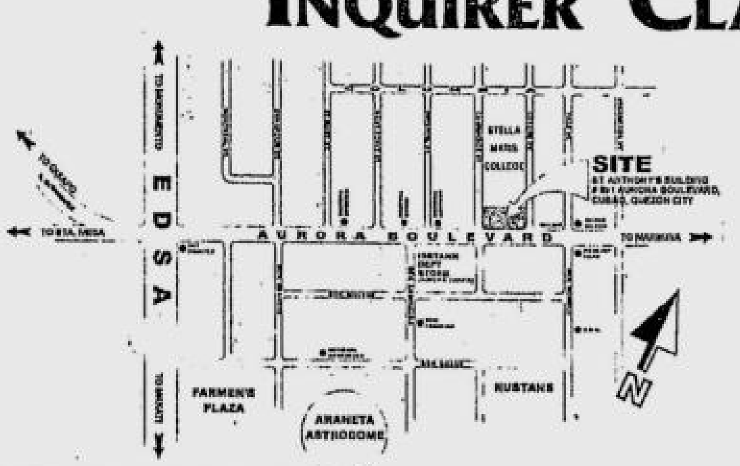

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Her loving children and spouses, **Dra. Lita** and **Jimmy Santos, Benny** and **Virgie Anzures**; sisters **Lemy** and **Pining**; brother and spouse **Ruding** and **Pacing**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 5, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City. Interment will be held on Sunday, December 16, 2001 at Bambang Cemetery, Bulacan, Bulacan at 7:00 a.m.

Pura Librea Isidro

Has peacefully joined her Creator and
her late husband Eng'r. Nemesio Isidro
on December 10, 2001.

Her loving children **Linda & Ric, Boy & Girlie, Romy & Beth, Jake & Marilou, Niña & Randy, Girlie & Sonny** and **Joey**; her sister **Femy**; her grandchildren, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends request the faithful for prayers for her eternal happiness.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Spirit Chapel, B.F. Homes, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

On Saturday, December 15, 2001 after the 7:00 a.m. Mass at Sto. Cristo Parish Church, Bo. Bungad, Frisco, Quezon City. Interment will follow at the Eternal Garden Memorial Crematorium and Chapel, Kalookan City at 10:00 a.m.

In loving memory
on the 1st Death Anniversary

SR. SUPT. MARCELO S. CASTILLO III

PMA Class '68

Who joined his Creator on December 18, 2000

His wife **Blet Villanueva** and daughter **Charlene**;
father **Col. Marcelo Castillo II**; sisters **Carolyn**, **Marlyn** and **Jacquelyn**
request the pious readers to pray for his soul.

Masses will be offered at the :

Libingan ng mga Bayani, Ft. Bonifacio	Dec.14- 5:00 p.m.
Lourdes Church, Baguio City	Dec.18 - 6:30 a.m.
San Nicolas de Tolentino, Congressional Ave. Q.C.	Dec.18 - 6:30 a.m.
UST Church	Dec.18 - 7:30 a.m.
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park	Dec.18 - 7:30 a.m.
Baguio Cathedral, Baguio City	Dec.18 - 5:15 p.m.

TEOFILO "Pelong" F. CAYABYAB

February 6, 1926 - December 12, 2001

His loving wife **Felisa;** children **Myrna, Melanio, Alma, Amadeo, Jesus, Susana** and **Daniel** request relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at 140 Brgy. Turac, San Carlos City, Pangasinan near Turac Elementary School.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 16, 2001, 2:00 p.m. at Basista Cemetery, Basista, Pangasinan.

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death.
He will raise us to life with Jesus.
He will present us, along with you."
(2 Cor. 4:14)

JEANETTE LORICO MENDOZA

Peacefully joined the Lord on December 11, 2001

Her loving husband **Bert**; children & in-laws **Candy & Argee**, **Joy & Jun**, **Ron & Dang**, **Nikka**; grandchildren **Miguel**, **Paolo**, **Carlos**, **Sofia**, **RL** & **Aaron**; brothers and sisters; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Sucat, Parañaque. Cremation will be on Sunday, December 16, 2001, 10:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park - Crematorium at Sucat, Parañaque City after the 8:30 a.m. Holy Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

I am the
way the
truth and
the life.
No one
comes to
the Father
except
through
Me.
John 14:6

LINO A. BAUTISTA

of Rosales, Pangasinan

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 7, 2001 at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **Naty**; children **Nilo & Linda, Ronnie, Andy & Joy, Gene & Marivic, Chiqui & Joe, Joey & Imelda, Telly & Jean Robert, Manfred & Bea**; sisters and brothers-in-law, grandchildren, nephews and nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 16, 2001, at the Rosales Cemetery, Rosales, Pangasinan, after the 9:30 AM Mass at the Rosales Catholic Church.

DOMINADOR L. AJERO, SR.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on December 12, 2001
at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **Flora**; children and grandchildren, request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on December 16, 2001 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park.

IMELDA C. de las ARMAS

"Ninang Mending"

Peacefully joined the Lord on December 12, 2001 at the age of 79.
Her remains lie at Constancia, Sampaloc, Manila.
Interment is on December 16, 2001 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

ATTY. BENJAMIN D. QUINERI

Former Chief Legal Dept. BID and
Dean of Foreign Service University
of Manila

Peacefully joined our Creator
on December 11, 2001 at the age of 81.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on December 15, 2001, 7:00 a.m. at Sariaya Memorial Park, Sariaya, Quezon.

GERTRUDES RANCES SAMANTELA

Has joined her late husband
***Atty. Alfredo Samantela, Sr.** & peacefully rests*
in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord
on December 9, 2001 at the age of 84.

Mass will be celebrated by **Bishop Soc Villegas** tonight, December 14, 2001 at 8:00 p.m. Necrological services will follow.

Her loving children **Nina & Rene, Alex & Alma, Alfredo Jr.**; her grandchildren **Owi & Marc**; nieces, nephews, other relatives & friends request for prayers for her eternal happiness.

Her remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes Chapel 2-B, 264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, December 15, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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F. SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
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People, Events & Products

Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Singapore: world's favorite business city

THOUSANDS of travelers in Asia and Europe have voted for Singapore as their best business destination. This was the unanimous result of three separate readership polls conducted by Time Magazine, Business Traveller Asia Pacific (BTAP) and Business Traveller UK (BTUK).

This is the first time European travelers have voted for Singapore as their favorite business city in the BTUK poll. Singapore has toppled London's three-year reign.

But this is the third successive year that Singapore has gained the unanimous vote of BTAP's readers as their best business city in the world.

Singapore Tourism Board's chief executive Yeo Khee Leng said, ''Such recognition from frequent business travelers is excellent for Singapore. We thank all those who have given their votes of confidence, and we promise them that we in Singapore will continue to ensure we do not disappoint them.

"In these difficult times, we wish to assure our customers and partners in the industry that the STB will do everything possible to work towards recovery together with them. Our strategies have been and will always be guided by the priorities of our partners. These awards won by Singapore are testimony to the industry's illustrious record."

Criteria used by the publications ranged from infrastructure to relative ease of doing business.

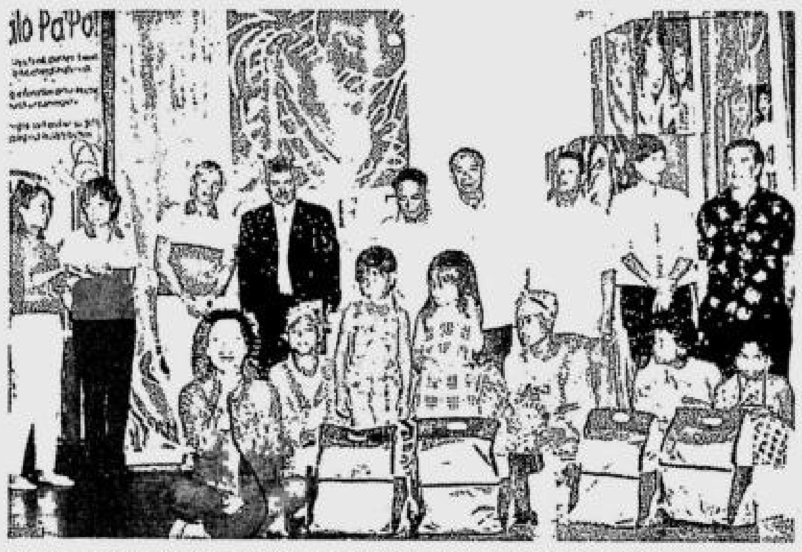
Other winners from Singapore were Changi Airport and Singapore Airlines, which topped reader's choice in the BTAP and Time Awards.

Last year, about 19 percent of total visitor arrivals to Singapore were business travelers.

Singapore has also been the world's top fifth convention city and Asia's number one by the Union des Associations Internationales – the MICE industry's international barometer of conventions cities' standards.

'TEENS READ, TOO' LAUNCHED

COMMITTED to promoting youth readership in the Philippines, the Philippine Daily Inquirer recently joined forces with Adarna House, Filipinas Heritage Library, MTV Ink, and Candy Magazine in launching 'Teens Read, Too!', a readership campaign for teens. The program, which involves inter-school competitions, seminars with distinguished writers, and a Teens Lit Camp, has mobilized the support of 12 high schools in Metro Manila. Signing the memorandum of agreement (from left) are Candy Magazine group publisher Ma. Aurora Mangubat, Adarna House president Emelina S. Almario, Philippine Daily Inquirer president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, Filipinas Heritage Library director Antonia Ortigas and MTV Ink editor-in-chief Christine Fonacier.



TOTAL SPONSORS GMA'S GIVE-A-GIFT 2001

Believing in the spirit of giving, TotalFinaElf Philippines (TFE Phils.) one of the strongest new players in the oil industry, has agreed to sponsor GMA Foundation's 'Give-a-Gift' program, an annual gift-giving activity for underprivileged children. Shown during the program's launch at the Glorietta Mall in Makati City was popular singer Jaya serenading children from different cultural communities such as the Manobo, Tagbanua and Aeta tribes with their representatives. Among those in the back row are (fourth, third, second and first from left) TFE Phils. president and managing director Jeff Attwood together with Joanna Attwood, TFE Phils. corporate affairs manager Rona Quejada with GMA Foundation's executive director, Carmen Jimenez-Ong. Also shown are celebrities Lani Mercado and German Moreno, who also came in to participate and distribute gifts.

Invest strategically with Sun Life Prosperity Funds

ONE of the most important principles in investing is diversification. How often have your heard that you should not put all your eggs in one basket? Analysts of the recent economic debacle that affected the Philippines have said that many took a chance in concentrating their investments in one thing, like landbanking, only to lose everything when they could not liquidate their assets in time. Had they invested in other forms of investments, they would have been more prepared to survive the crisis.

Unfortunately, not all of us may have the chance, the capital and the time to play around with different kinds of investments. This is where a mutual fund may be of great benefit to you. By investing as little as P10,000 you can have investments in a wide array of stocks, bonds or both, without the hassle of having to monitor your investments closely. Through the assistance of trained financial advisors, your money will be pooled with the money of other investors and invested in various corporations or bond instruments. This resulting diversity in your investment will give you the benefit of being more prepared to face the ups and downs of the investing game.

In looking for mutual funds to invest in look no further than the Sun Life Prosperity Funds, a family of mutual funds, composed of the Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund, the Sun Life Prosperity Philippine Equity Fund, and the Sun Life Prosperity Balanced Fund. These funds are managed by Sun Life Asset Management Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sun Life Financial of Canada, one of the top and largest insurance and wealth management companies in the world. With its unique feature of allowing investors to move from one fund to another at no extra cost, the Sun Life Prosperity Funds gives investors the flexibility and the convenience of ensuring they have a sufficient mix of investments that will protect their future.

For more information on Sun Life Prosperity Funds, call 849-9999. Now get all those eggs out of that one basket.

BPI FAMILY BANK AND UNION INK CBA

BPI Family Bank and its employees' Union signed a three-year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) recently. Under this new CBA package, BPI Family Bank rank and file employees will receive a P3,550 increase in their monthly salary over three years, plus improvements in other cash and non-cash benefits. 'The best part is that both sides are happy with the resolution. The CBA negotiations were done very quickly and efficiently. It reflects the kind of partnership that BPI Family Bank would like to have with everyone,' notes Aurelio R. Montinola III, BPI Family Bank president. Ferdinand Sta. Ana, the Union president, said 'Rest assured, the union officers and members will go hand in hand in helping management to maintain the No. 1 position of BPI Family Bank.' BPI Family Bank said that the CBA negotiations were conducted in record time with no business disruption. It also said that the CBA settlement provides for evenly distributed increases in the employees' basic monthly salary that are consistent with the prevailing business conditions and inflation outlook. BPI Family Bank is a wholly owned subsidiary and the consumer lending unit of BPI (Bank of the Philippine Islands). BPI is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. Just recently, BPI has also successfully concluded its three-year CBA with its Metro Manila employees Union.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Toll Regulatory Board
(Grantor)

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION
(Grantee)

Notice is hereby given that the Toll Regulatory Board approved the toll rate increase of Philippine National Construction Corporation for the North Luzon Expressway from Balintawak to Sta. Ines and the South Luzon Expressway from Alabang to Calamba. The adjusted toll rate shall be published by the Grantee in a newspaper of general circulation at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks.

Per Board Resolution No. 2001-62, the following rates will be implemented on January 01, 2002.

A. NORTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY

CLASS 1 (Cars, Jeepneys, Pick-ups, Vans)

ENTRY/EXIT	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	GUI	STR	PUL	SNM	SNF	ANG	DAU
Mapulang Lupa	2.00											
Valenzuela	3.00											
Lawang Bato	3.00	1.00										
Meycauayan	4.00	2.00										
St. Francis	4.00	2.00										
Marilao	5.00	3.00	2.00									
Bocaue	6.00	4.00	3.00	2.00								
Balagtas	8.00	6.00	5.00	3.00	2.00							
Guigunto	9.00	7.00	5.00	4.00	3.00							
Tabang	10.00	8.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	1.00						
Sta. Rita	10.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	4.00							
Pulilan	12.00	10.00	9.00	8.00	6.00		3.00					
San Simon	16.00	14.00	13.00	12.00	10.00		7.00	4.00				
San Fernando	19.00	17.00	16.00	15.00	13.00		10.00	7.00	3.00			
Angeles	24.00	22.00	21.00	20.00	18.00		15.00	12.00	9.00	6.00		
Dau	25.00	23.00	21.00	20.00	19.00		15.00	13.00	9.00	6.00	1.00	
Sta. Ines	27.00	25.00	23.00	22.00	21.00		17.00	15.00	11.00	8.00	3.00	2.00

CLASS 2 (Light Trucks, Tourist/School & PUB, Class 1w/ Trailer, Class 1-7ft. & above ht.

ENTRY/EXIT	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	GUI	STR	PUL	SNM	SNF	ANG	DAO
Mapulang Lupa	4.00											
Valenzuela	5.00											
Lawang Bato	6.00	2.00										
Meycauayan	8.00	4.00										
St. Francis	8.00	4.00										
Marilao	10.00	6.00	3.00									
Bocaue	12.00	8.00	5.00	3.00								
Balagtas	16.00	12.00	9.00	6.00	4.00							
Guigunto	17.00	13.00	10.00	8.00	5.00							
Tabang	19.00	15.00	12.00	9.00	7.00	2.00						
Sta. Rita	20.00	16.00	13.00	11.00	8.00							
Pulilan	24.00	20.00	17.00	15.00	12.00		5.00					
San Simon	32.00	28.00	25.00	23.00	20.00		13.00	8.00				
San Fernando	38.00	34.00	31.00	29.00	26.00		19.00	14.00	6.00			
Angeles.	48.00	44.00	41.00	39.00	36.00		29.00	24.00	17.00	11.00		
Dau	50.00	46.00	42.00	40.00	38.00		30.00	26.00	18.00	12.00	2.00	
Sta. Ines	53.00	49.00	46.00	44.00	41.00		34.00	29.00	22.00	16.00	6.00	4.00

CLASS 3 (Heavy & Multi-Axled Trucks/Trailers)

ENTRY/EXIT	BWK	VAL	MEY	MAR	BOC	GUI	STR	PUL	SNM	SNF	ANG	DAU
Mapulang Lupa	6.00											
Valenzuela	7.00											
Lawang Bato	9.00	3.00										
Meycauayan	11.00	5.00										
St. Francis	12.00	6.00										
Marilao	15.00	8.00	4.00									
Bocaue	18.00	12.00	8.00	4.00								
Balagtas	23.00	17.00	13.00	9.00	5.00							
Guigunto	25.00	19.00	15.00	11.00	8.00							
Tabang	28.00	22.00	17.00	14.00	10.00	3.00						
Sta. Rita	30.00	23.00	19.00	16.00	12.00							
Pulilan	36.00	30.00	26.00	22.00	18.00		7.00					
San Simon	48.00	42.00	37.00	34.00	30.00		19.00	12.00				
San Fernando	57.00	51.00	46.00	43.00	39.00		28.00	21.00	9.00			
Angeles	72.00	66.00	61.00	58.00	54.00		43.00	36.00	25.00	16.00		
Dau	74.00	68.00	63.00	60.00	56.00		45.00	38.00	27.00	18.00	3.00	
Sta. Ines	80.00	73.00	69.00	65.00	62.00		50.00	44.00	32.00	23.00	8.00	6.00

B. SOUTH LUZON EXPRESSWAY

CLASS 1 (Cars, Jeepneys, Pick-ups, Vans)

ENTRY/EXIT	ALA	FIL	SUS HTS	SWOODS	CAR	MAM	STR	CAB
Alabang								
Filinvest	2.00							
Susana Heights	2.00	2.00						
Southwoods	4.00	4.00	2.00					
Carmona	5.00	5.00	3.00	1.00				
Mamplasan	6.00	6.00	4.00	2.00	1.00			
Sta. Rosa	7.00	7.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	1.00		
Cabuyao	10.00	9.00	8.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	
Silangan	10.00	10.00	8.00	6.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	1.00
Calamba	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	7.00	6.00	5.00	3.00

CLASS 2 (Light Trucks, Tourist/School & PUB, Class 1 w/ Trailer, Class 1-7 ft. & above ht.)

ENTRY/EXIT	ALA	FIL	SUS HTS	SWOODS	CAL	MAM	STR	CAB
Alabang								
Filinvest	4.00							
Susana Heights	4.00	3.00						
Southwoods	9.00	8.00	5.00					
Carmona	10.00	9.00	6.00	1.00				
Mamplasan	12.00	11.00	8.00	4.00	2.00			
Sta. Rosa	14.00	13.00	10.00	6.00	4.00	2.00		
Cabuyao	19.00	18.00	15.00	10.00	9.00	7.00	5.00	
Silangan	20.00	19.00	16.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	6.00	1.00
Calamba	25.00	24.00	21.00	16.00	14.00	12.00	10.00	5.00

CLASS 3 (Heavy & Multi-Axled Trucks/Trailers)

ENTRY/EXIT	ALA	FIL	SUS HTS	SWOODS	CAR	MAM	STR	CAB
Alabang								
Filinvest	6.00							
Susana Heights	6.00	5.00						
Southwoods	13.00	12.00	7.00					
Carmona	15.00	14.00	9.00	2.00				
Mamplasan	19.00	17.00	13.00	5.00	3.00			
Sta. Rosa	22.00	20.00	16.00	8.00	6.00	3.00		
Cabuyao	29.00	27.00	23.00	15.00	13.00	10.00	7.00	
Silangan	31.00	29.00	24.00	17.00	15.00	12.00	9.00	2.00
Calamba	37.00	35.00	31.00	24.00	22.00	18.00	15.00	8.00

Note: Any interested expressway user shall have the right to file within 0 period of ninety (90) days after the date of publication of this order a petition with the TRB (2nd Floor, IBP Building, Doña Juana Vargas Avenue, Pasig City for a review of the toll rates.

SO ORDERED, November 30, 2001.

By Authority of the Board.

(Sgd.) **JAIME S. DUMLAO, JR.**
Executive Director

Ericsson reveals R600 – the new GPRS mobile phone

ERICSSON recently revealed the development of the new mobile phone R600 – a GPRS performance phone. The new Ericsson R600 will be available on selected GSM 900/1800 markets in the fourth quarter and on all GSM 900/1800 markets in first quarter 2002.

The R600 is a powerful phone that supports highly developed features such as enhanced messaging, fast mobile Internet access and several personalized options. This makes the R600 ideal for people who are about to buy their first phone, or replace an older model, and want an affordable up-to-date phone. With the R600, fast mobile Internet will be available to a wide audience.

The Ericsson R600 is performance all the way through. The small size, built-in antenna and large display is accompanied by an attractive, smooth and streamlined design that makes the phone rest comfortably in the hand. The R600 comes in two fresh colors, Luminous Champagne and Ice Blue.

The large 5-row gray-scale display is perfect for messaging and with Enhanced Messaging Service (EMS), the user can send and receive fun and attractive messages on the spot. Pictures, animations, sound effects and ring signals are inserted into messages with just a few clicks. The phone comes with a wide range of pictures, animations and sound effects from the start, and new ones can easily be added. The R600 also has mobile chat, which is an SMS-based service that lets the user have a chat session similar to a chat on the Internet.

GPRS provides instant access to entertainment and news, and gives users a quicker way to download pictures and ring signals to further personalize their R600. Supporting speeds of up to 43.2 kbps, the R600 ensures that users get the fastest mobile Internet connection available.

The R600 can be personalized in several ways. The display color can be set to green, red or orange and be used both as a constant background display color and for identifying a caller. Link a color to a contact in the phone book and you get a colorful hint on who is calling. The R600 also features a background picture in the display that is available when the phone is in standby mode and gives the phone a personal touch.

The R600 has a basic calendar with day, week and month views and reminders when something is due. The phone book lets store up to 200 contacts and the shortcut function in standby gives users quick access to any contact in the phone book. The R600 also has four games: Erix, Catcher, Pathy and Ripple.

Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor
SPROJECTS@INQUIRER.COM.PH.
Larry Mariano, Account Manager

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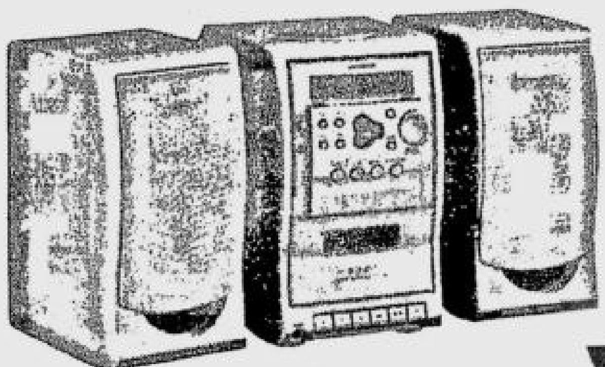

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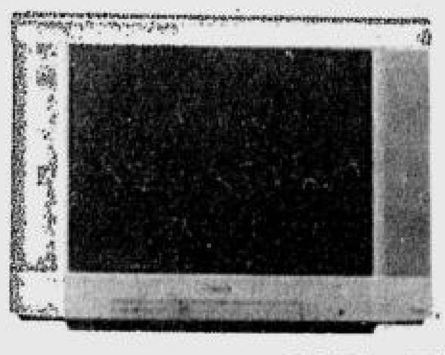

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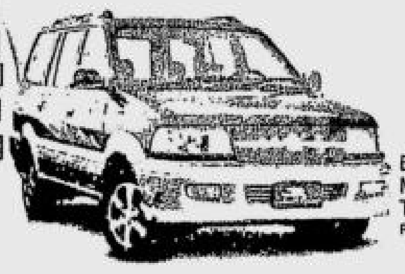

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- Chance to WIN a Lifetime Membership Share at Fontana Leisure Park.
- Zero % and Shock-free Rates on selected Items & Credit Cards
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Promo Period: November 16, 2001 - January 20, 2002 - Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1665. Series of 2001.

WESTERN

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Mandaluyong City
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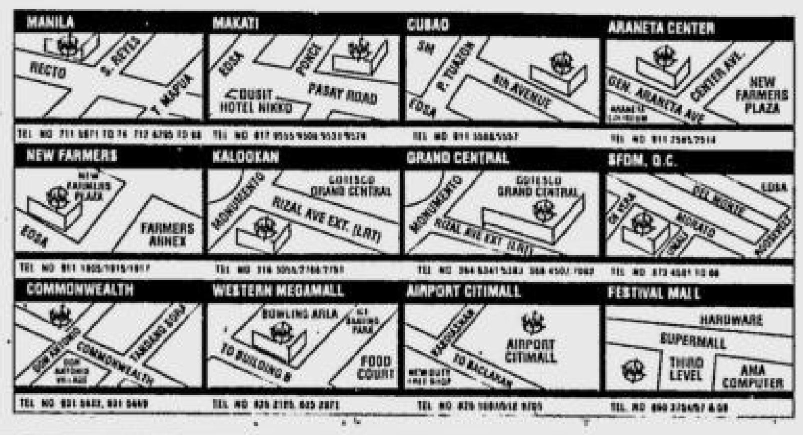
STA ROSA BRANCH
Second Level, Target Mall

STA ROSA COMMERCIAL CENTER
Balibago, Sta. Rosa Laguna
Tels.: 6992349 • 6992295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GRAND CENTRAL
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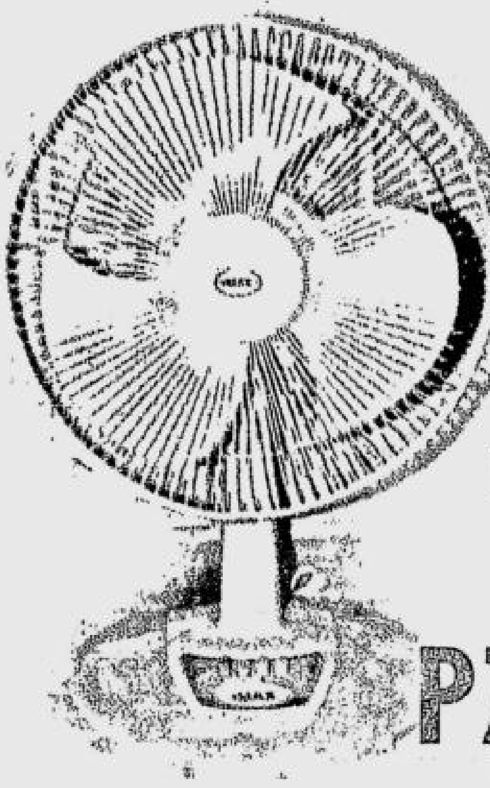

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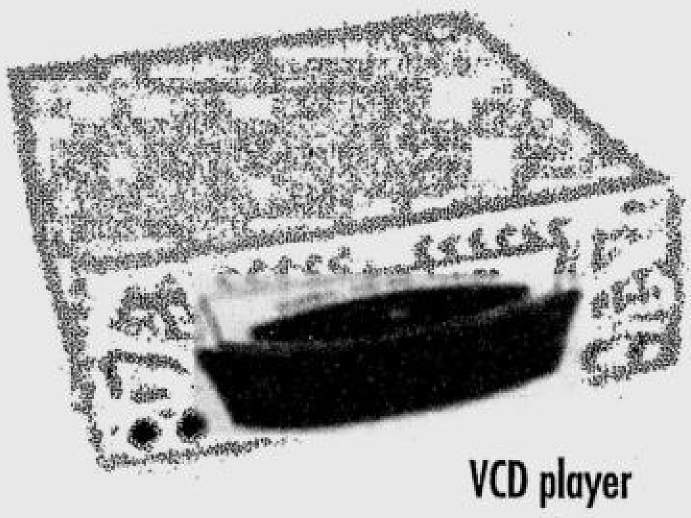

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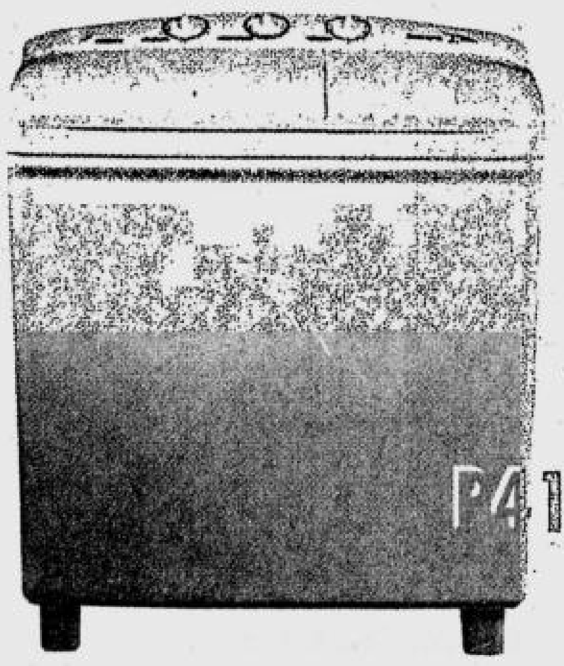

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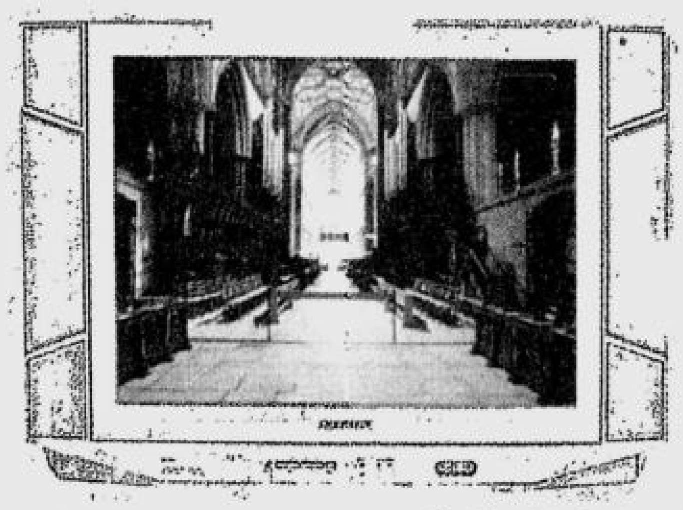

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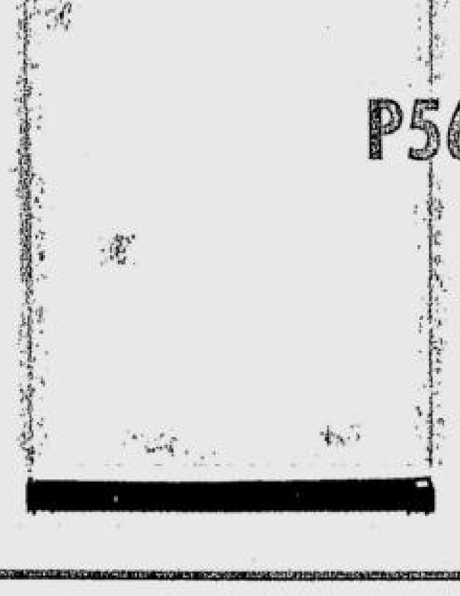

6 cu.ft.
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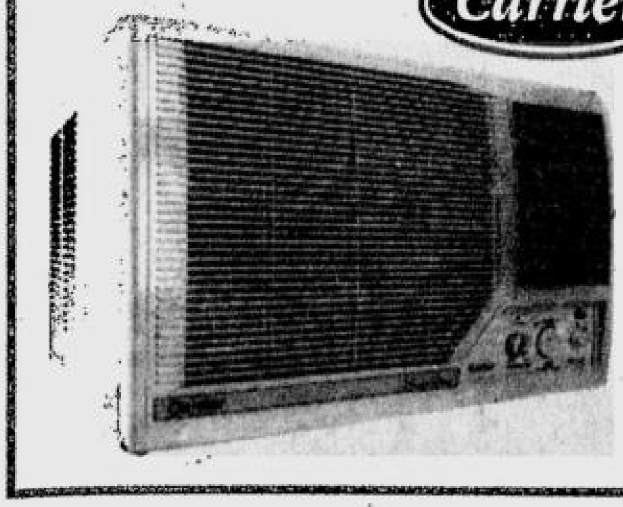

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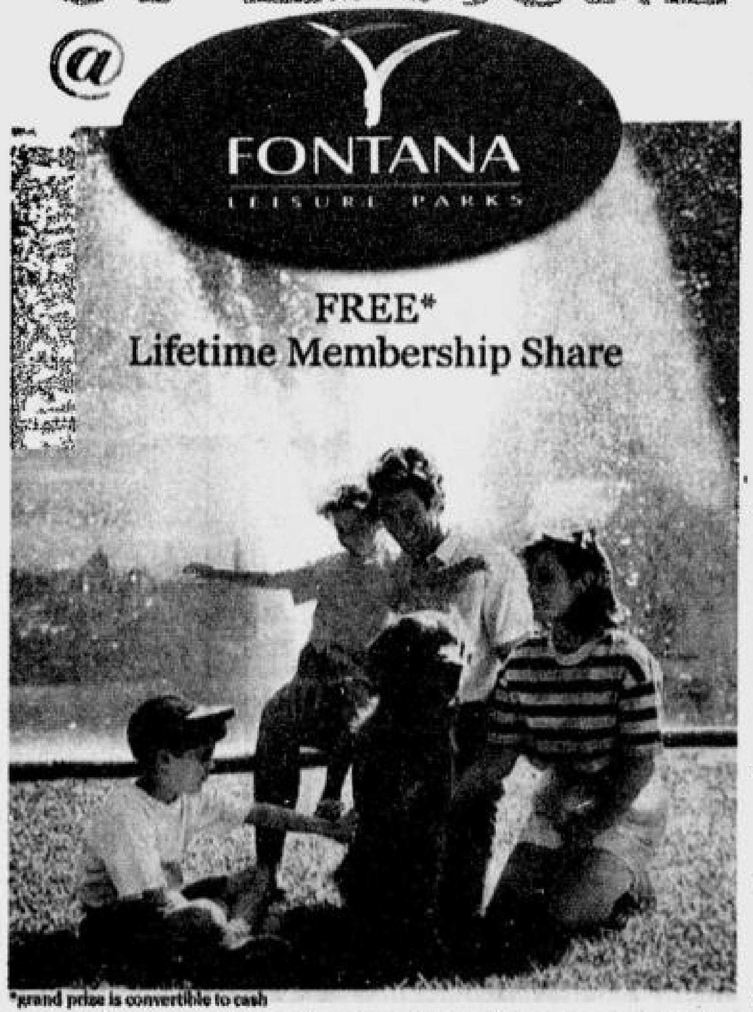

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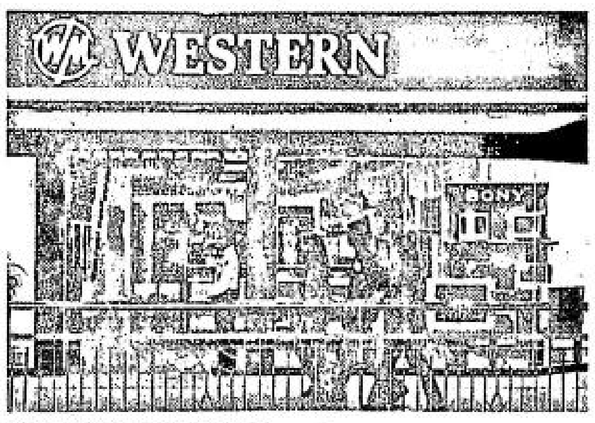
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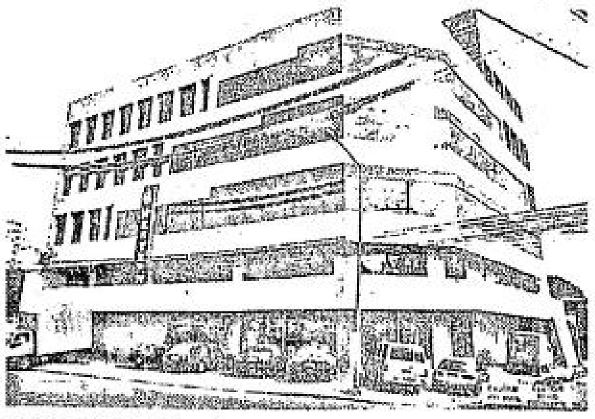
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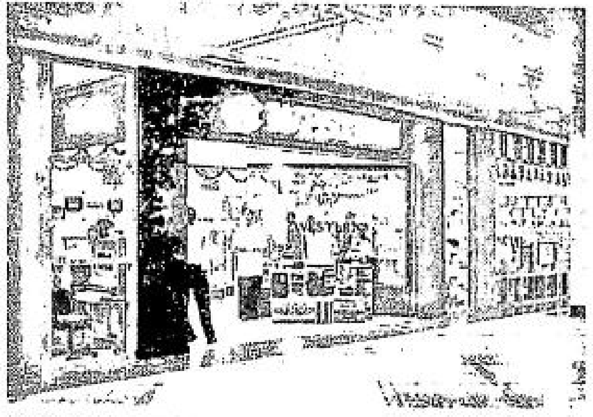
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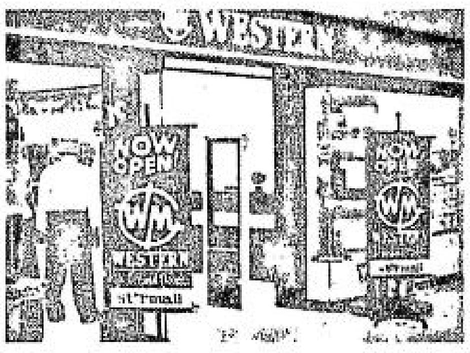
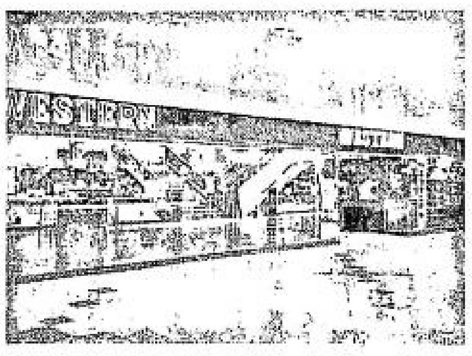

STAR MALL (Mandaluyong City)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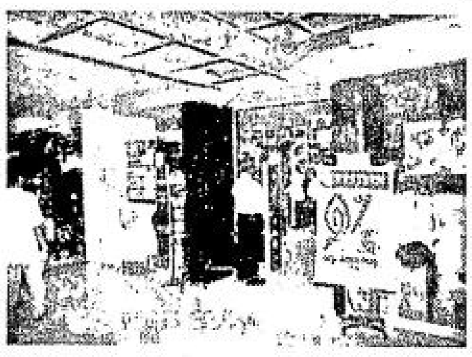
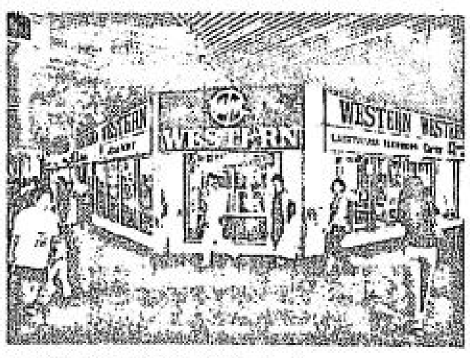
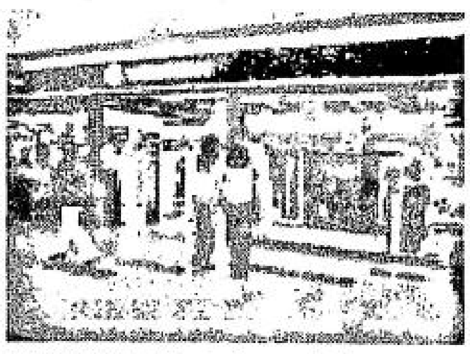

FARMERS PLAZA (Cubao)


FARMERS ANNEX (Cubao)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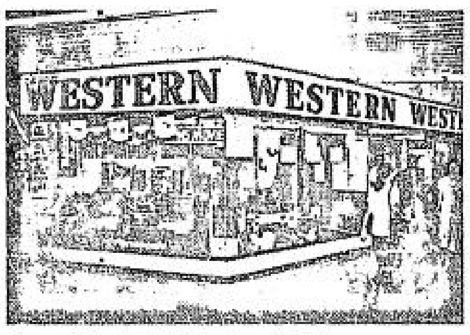
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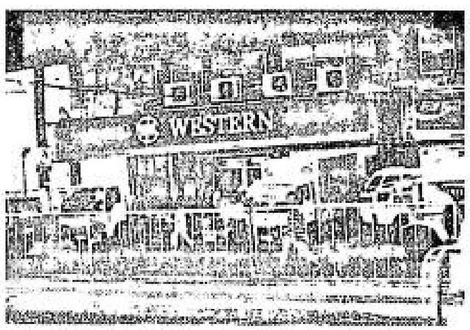
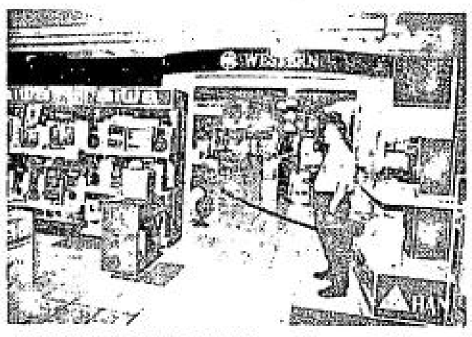

KALOOKAN (Kalookan City)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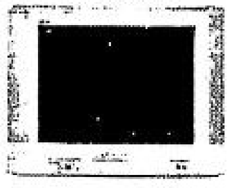
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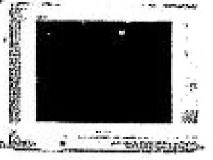
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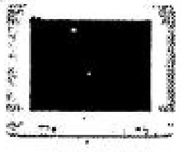
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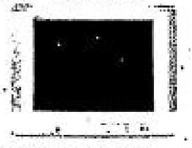
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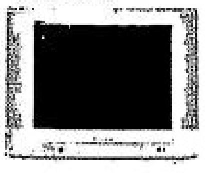
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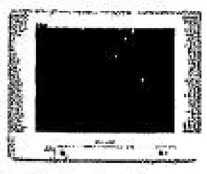
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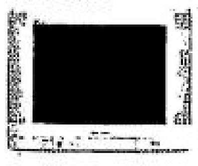
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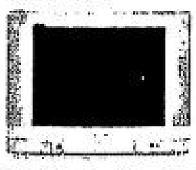
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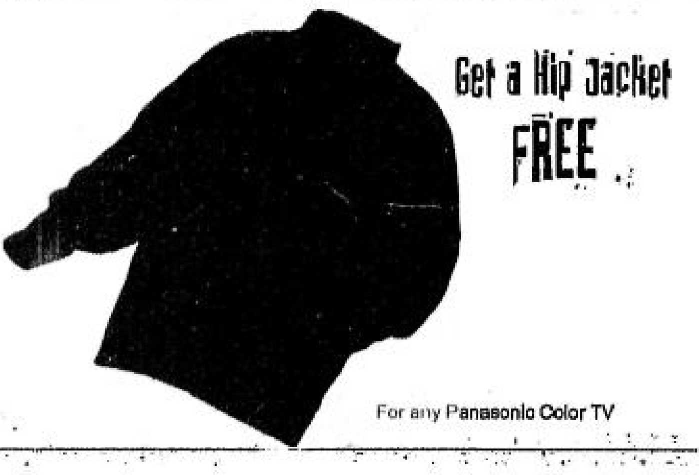
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Fed cuts to lift US economy next year

WASHINGTON—Cuts in US interest rates to 40-year lows are expected to help pave the way for an economic recovery by early 2002, but analysts caution that rip-roaring growth may not resume any time soon.

Every recession is unique but many economists say that in some ways, the pattern of the current downturn will mirror that of the last recession of 1990-91: a mild contraction followed by a gradual recovery.

"Ten years ago, people talked about the jobless recovery. This one could start off in a similar kind of vein," said chief economist Bill Cheney of John Hancock Financial Services.

Things were different back in 1980. Then the United States saw a steep contraction followed by huge pickup in growth.

This time around, Cheney said, "It will be hard to get a quick pop in growth."

On Tuesday, Fed policymakers trimmed rates to 1.75 percent, the lowest since 1961 and the first time in 40 years that short-term rates reached below 2 percent. It was the 11th move in one of the most aggressive rate-cutting sprees in Fed history.

Fed cautious on outlook

The central bank said the economic risks were tilted toward weakness "in the foreseeable future." Such verbiage is the Fed's way of indicating it may not be done cutting rates.

Some economists think Fed chief Allan Greenspan may give the economy one more dose of his rate-cutting medicine, perhaps lowering borrowing costs another quarter point early next year.

But bond market interest rates have been heading higher for weeks, reflecting sentiment that a recovery is near.

"That normally means we're going to see a resumption of growth," said Chris Rupkey, economist at Bank of Tokyo/Mitsubishi in New York.

US gross domestic product contracted 1.1 percent in the third quarter and is widely expected to have shrunk again in the final three months of the year.

In the latest survey by Blue Chip Economic Indicators, 59 percent of private forecasters projected that the recession would end in either February or March of next year.

A London bank worker counts euro bank notes as the first notes arrive in Britain's high street banks, 20 days before they become legal tender across most of Europe. The new notes, to be launched on Jan. 1, 2002, will be available in 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, and 5 denominations. Britain, however, is retaining its sterling currency as its main tender while much of Europe will fully adopt the new currency at the start of next year.

REUTERS/RUSSELL BOYCE

As HP deal sours, Compaq prepares for future

SAN FRANCISCO—What was going to be a juggernaut of technology mergers is starting to look like the Titanic.

On Sept. 4, venerable Hewlett-Packard, helmed by the steely and determined Carlton "Carly" Fiorina, announced it was merging with computer maker Compaq of Houston.

The deal, a $25-billion stock swap, would have created a computer company second only to IBM in terms of revenues.

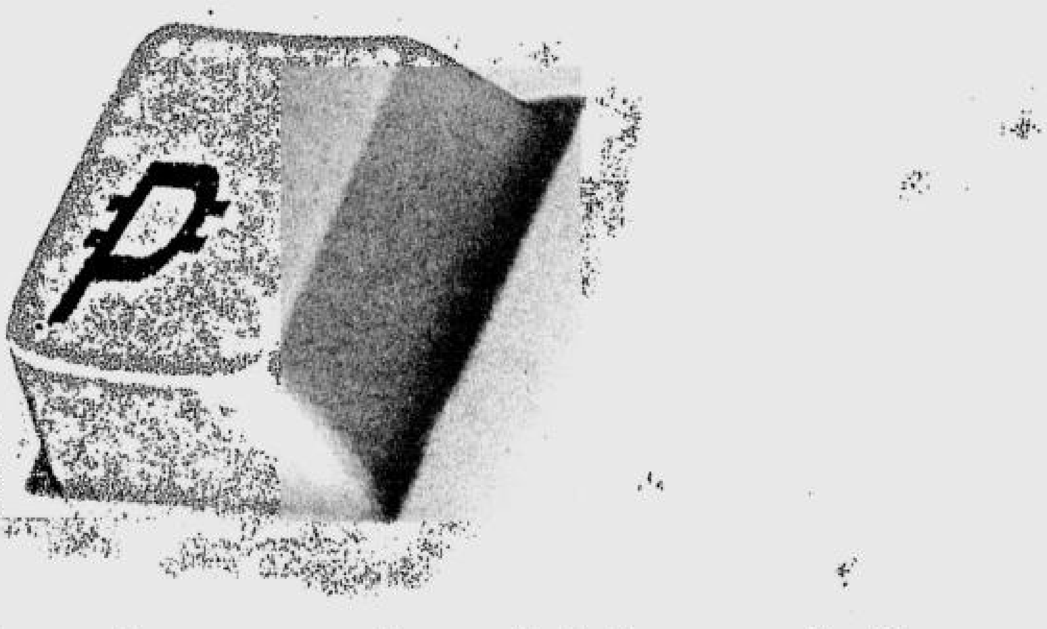
But in November, a wrench was hurled into the works, as the heirs to HP's founders publicly objected to the deal, saying it grafted a flailing Compaq onto a HP that has been in the financial doldrums since the worldwide technology slowdown this year.

Now Compaq is starting to prepare for the worst. According to a memo to employees from Compaq CEO Michael Capellas, published Tuesday in the Wall Street Journal, it is time to start figuring out where the life jackets are.

In the memo sent by e-mail during the past weekend, Compaq chief executive Michael Capellas said he still supports HP's acquisition, but conceded "our responsibility is to maintain a pragmatic view of our business and a clear focus on the future."

"Whether we are part of the new HP or a stand-alone company," Compaq would continue to build its sales around packages of hardware, software and services, he was quoted as saying.

The memo followed a decision Friday by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to vote against the Compaq-HP deal, a move that has raised many new questions about the companies' ability to complete the tie-up. *AFP*



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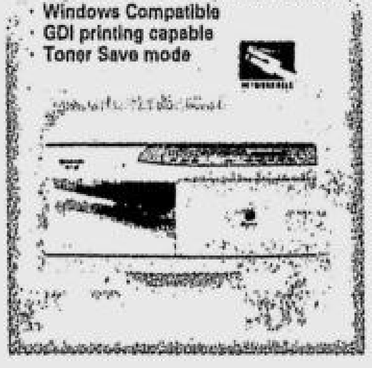

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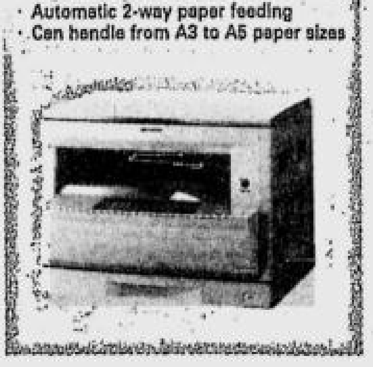

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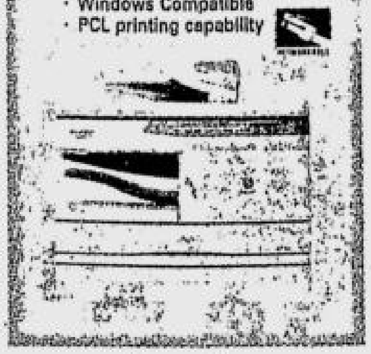

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Japan exports slump for 7th straight month

TOKYO—Japan's current account surplus rose in October, but a fall in exports for a seventh straight month due to the slowing world economy put a dent in the more narrowly defined trade surplus, data showed on Thursday.

Surplus in the current account—the broadest measure of trade in goods, services and other transactions—rose 14 percent in October from a year earlier as a surplus in the income account rose for a 15th month, boosted by higher returns on overseas investments.

The Finance Ministry said that increased returns on direct investment in businesses abroad, as well as returns on portfolio investment in stocks and bonds, contributed to the bigger income account surplus.

"The net receipt in income has become a big factor recently, particularly income from portfolio investment," Nikko Salomon Smith Barney economist Tomoko Fujii said.

Japanese investors have been a major force in world financial markets over the years, and with a dearth of lucrative investment opportunities at home, foreign investment is poised to increase, she said.

Ministry data also showed that Japanese investors bought a net 5.51 trillion yen ($43.75 billion) of foreign bonds and a net 578 billion yen of foreign stocks in October. In September, they were net sellers of both.

Near-zero interest rates and slumping equities markets in Japan's recession-wracked economy have turned investors away from domestic stocks and bonds.

"For now, the net income from these foreign investments is making up—just barely—for the fall in the trade surplus," Fujii said.

Slumping exports

The trade surplus shrank for a 16th month in a row, falling 26.6 percent in October as exports declined for a seventh straight month due to a global downturn in demand.

Imports sagged 4.6 percent, a third month of decline, due to weak demand at home. But that fall was overshadowed by a 9-percent drop in exports.

Officials said the decline in exports would likely continue, with the world economy still suffering in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States.

"The trend going forward very much depends on how the global economy rebounds, and when Japan recovers," a Finance Ministry official said. "But we do expect the fall in exports to continue, so the trade surplus should continue to shrink."

Growth data released last week confirmed that Japan's economy, the world's second biggest, had slipped into recession, with gross domestic product shrinking for a second straight quarter in July-September. *Reuters*

Record corporate bond defaults in 2001–S & P

NEW YORK—Corporate bond defaults have soared to record levels, with 196 issuers defaulting on approximately $107 billion of debt through Dec. 7, 2001, according to Standard & Poor's. The previous record of 117 issuers defaulting on $42.3 billion of debt was set for all of 2000.

"The absolute number and dollar amount of defaults are unprecedented, and default rates—the percentage of issuers defaulting—are approaching 1991 record levels when the economy also was in recession," said Brooks Brady, author of the study for Standard & Poor's Risk Solutions. "The default rate for all issuers currently stands at 3.71 percent, which is the highest level since 1991 when 3.96 percent of all issuers defaulted.

"Of the high-yield issuers, 8.92 percent defaulted and 0.6 percent of investment-grade issuers have defaulted this year. These are the highest rates since 1991 when 12.73 percent of high-yield issuers and 0.81 percent of investment-grade issuers defaulted."

"Investment-grade defaults through December totaled 20, the largest we have ever recorded," Brady said. "To put this number in perspective, there were 13 investment-grade defaults in 1991." While these are preliminary figures, they will almost certainly increase by the end of the calendar year. Default statistics for 2001 will be finalized and published in more details in early 2002.

Totals through Dec. 7, 2001 are as follows: 156 defaults have occurred in the United States, followed by Argentina with 11, Canada with 9, the United Kingdom with 5 and Australia with 3. One default each has taken place in Bermuda, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Russia and Thailand. *Reuters*

SGS sees growth in 2002

ZURICH—Despite the difficult economic environment, Swiss inspection services group Societe de Generale Services sees sales growth in 2002, SGS chair Max Amstutz told Reuters in a recent interview.

"It is a difficult environment, but I don't expect a break in the trend to improvement," said Amstutz. "The world economy is depressed but if we look back we have had a relatively good few months," he added.

Amstutz said he expected a settlement to be reached with the Philippine government over an outstanding bill worth 206 million Swiss francs related to a customs inspection contract that ended in March last year.

SGS was "absolutely committed" to receiving the entire bill.

"There is no official message but we are closely following what happens and we are satisfied that progress is being made," adding that a deal was "possible" before the end of the year.

SGS stock prices have almost doubled since it hit multiyear lows at the start of October, partly on hopes that a deal will be reached with the Philippine government soon.

Amstutz was talking to Reuters on the sidelines of an event hosted by the Swiss-South East Asian Chamber of Commerce in which Philippine Vice President and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teofisto Guingona was the guest speaker.

"We are in the final stage of an agreement with SGS," Guingona told Reuters.

What it takes to create an award-winning ad

BY MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO

WHAT does it take to create an ad that will reap awards?

There is no sure formula but, simplicity always pulls through.

"Simplicity and likeability," puts in J. Rabboni S. Santos, one of the art directors of Aspac Advertising.

Aspac won the Platinum award for its "Phonetics" Nokia ads during the last Araw Awards in Cebu last Nov. 24.

The Araw Awards is the Oscars of Philippine advertising and getting a platinum means getting a perfect score from the judges, who included creative directors and foreign advertising experts.

The ad, aired middle of this year for only two months, but currently being re-aired, is simple enough—it shows a game in a phone with the sound of a car as background and warns of the dangers of using the mobile phone while driving.

The copy at the end simply says—Don't use your mobile phone while driving.

The series of ads of Nokia were part of the campaign on the ethical use of the mobile phones.

Jover R. Layno, Aspac's assistant vice president and creative director recalls, "There was a demand, an outcry from the public for a mobile phone manners campaign. Nokia being the brand leader came up with a public service campaign on the proper use of mobile phones. You can actually endanger the lives of people and yourself with the improper use of cell phones."

THE WINNING team: J. Rabboni S. Santos, Oscar C. Santos, Igor C. Maminta, Jon S. Salazar, Ruben T. Latonio, Ida R. Noche, Tahl T. Mejia and Jover R. Layno.

Reyno says the ad was presented to the client and was immediately approved.

The concept itself for the ad took only half a day to draw up.

Several creative people of Aspac sat down and brainstormed on the campaign. Senior artist/visualizer Ruben T. Latonio thought of the idea of turning off mobile phones inside a hospital. From there several versions were created.

The other one is called "School" and shows the letters of the alphabet flashing on the phone screen while the alphabet song is being played. When it comes to the letter "s," "Ssssh" follows. The line says "Switch off your mobile phone in class."

Another calls for the switching of phones on silent mode on certain occasions. The copy—Switch to silent mode in places of worship. The ad is called "Church."

The ad bested several ads. It was a good choice and although the creative group of Aspac did not want to admit they had it in the bag, they were not surprised that they won.

The group that gathered for the interview agreed that creative people ultimately prefer to travel the simple path in relaying their clients' messages to the audience.

As Layno puts it when they create an ad "you have to talk to a layman and there is really not much time in a commercial. You have to address how to arrest the audience's attention even for only 15 seconds."

"You have to be interesting, simple and entertaining," Layno adds.

Ida R. Noche, another art director, laments that clients sometimes want to put in a lot of clutter. They want their logos scattered all over the place. Creative people on the other hand "all aim for simplicity."

Unfortunately, at the end of the day it's the clients who win the argument for the simple reason that they hold the purse strings.

"You have to create an ally out of your clients, you have to be friends with your clients and sell them your ideas," Layno says.

Noche says clients who have background in advertising are easier to deal with in terms of presenting out-of-the-box ideas.

Copywriter Tahl T. Mejia agrees, saying they are more open minded but at the same time more demanding.

"It's good to have like minded clients who see it our way. The key is how to stand out from the clutter. Consumers do not give you the benefit of time because studies show they are subjected to thousands of messages everyday," Layno adds.

"You have to be entertaining to get your message across," says Mejia.

Layno says humor works. "You can slip in your proposition in an entertaining way."

But Noche says most clients choose safe ads. "And the culture of how advertising is done here is we still try to please the Filipino masses. Few are willing to take risks. They do not try to get other markets."

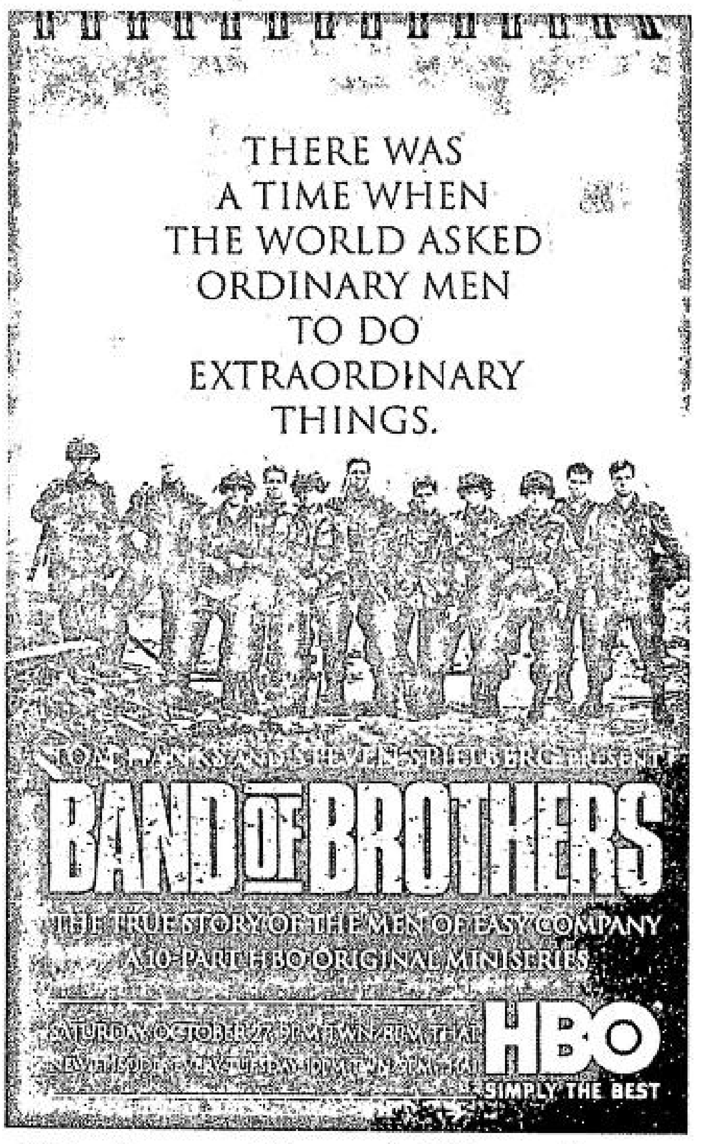
What usually happens is clients simply ask their agencies to create ads similar to their competitors.

This is why Noche, an art director, says Aspac is educating its clients by having screenings of award-winning ads all over the world.

And Layno says they asked their client, Nokia, to want to get the award as badly as the agency does.

The process of creating great ads are also simple enough—get a group of people to pop ideas with each other and pretty soon, a great one will be born.

Santos, another art director, says there is always food to fuel the mind and the body during these sessions.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BAND OF BROTHERS
THE TRUE STORY OF THE MEN OF EASY COMPANY
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HBO
SIMPLY THE BEST

Using the idiot box to promote reading

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

ASK any cable TV subscriber and they would say that one of the main reasons why they pay extra every month to get cable channels is to watch the HBO movie channel.

This is why many subscribers were up in arms when Skycable cut the HBO channel for some time when contract negotiations bogged down.

Such support from fans has made HBO the most popular cable channel in the Philippines, says HBO marketing communications director Caroline Wong.

Wong says this was a result of a marketing strategy that focused on forging strategic partnerships with local companies to push HBO and its original products that are produced by HBO exclusively for the HBO viewers.

A recent example is the tie-up between HBO and National Bookstore to promote the 10-part miniseries "Band of Brothers" that was produced by leading Hollywood figures Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg.

"Band of Brothers" is the most expensive television miniseries ever produced. It is based on the book of the same title written by Stephen Ambrose. It talks about the experience of the men of Easy Company during World War II.

"This year, HBO also had success with the other HBO Original Productions we have promoted. Simply mention "Sex and the City" and the response from the viewer is typically quite wild. So it shows that viewers do enjoy HBO Original Productions a great deal," she explains.

Wong says HBO believes that these original miniseries give HBO a competitive advantage over other movie channels.

The series, the final episode of which will be re-run this Saturday, also helped boost sales of the book in National Bookstore.

"In the Philippines, HBO has customized an integrated approach that combines local partners including radio, print media on the consumer level and also organized a joint promotion with National Bookstore to generate a buzz way before the premiere of the miniseries," Wong explains.

She adds that HBO has handpicked selected partners in key markets such as the Philippines to create and sustain the popularity of these original productions, such as "Band of Brothers" and "Sex and the City."

"HBO will continue to build our brand in the Philippines and the region for the channel's long-term growth. In addition to advertising, we would like to work with more local partners for joint promotions," she says.

She says building the brand is in line with HBO's philosophy to bring to the market cutting edge original programming like "Band of Brothers" and "Sex and the City."

"As a company, we are always looking for ways to push the boundaries to set new standard in the industry. As a result, HBO viewers get to enjoy the exclusive quality programs," she says.

Why do watch ads set their time . . .

(From page B24)

Sussex with the vague notion of being a foreign correspondent," he discloses. "I decided to get into it (advertising) when I decided being a journalist was too dangerous."

After helping some friends cover the coup d'etats that were wreaking havoc on the Philippines, and fearing he may be sent elsewhere, Guerrero, whose mother is English, went back to the UK to take up a graduate course in London's School of Communication Arts.

This armed him with the confidence to think of himself as "creative."

On why he was so set on living and working here, he replies, "It's because of what my dad achieved. Everything he'd done was too big to ignore."

His father was here often and the country seemed so mysterious, he wanted to know what it was all about.

"We were close, almost as friends as much as parent and child. Because of various circumstances I didn't spend that much time with him until I was 11 or 12 years old, so we had an adult-to-adult relationship," he explains.

During his teenage years, David and his dad would often discuss the latest ads and this inspired the young Guerrero's interest in advertising.

Ads fan

"He was actually quite a fan of advertisement. We used to discuss things like why do watch ads always show the watches set at 10 past 10. Or that the Winston slogan, A Winston tastes good like a cigarette should, was grammatically incorrect. (should be: tastes good *as* . . .) He paid a lot of attention," Guerrero recalls.

After four years in an advertising firm in the UK, Guerrero worked in Hong Kong and this allowed him to frequently fly back and forth to the Philippines, he says.

At that time, Guerrero was largely behind the award winning "Heart of Asia" campaign for Cathay Pacific Airways.

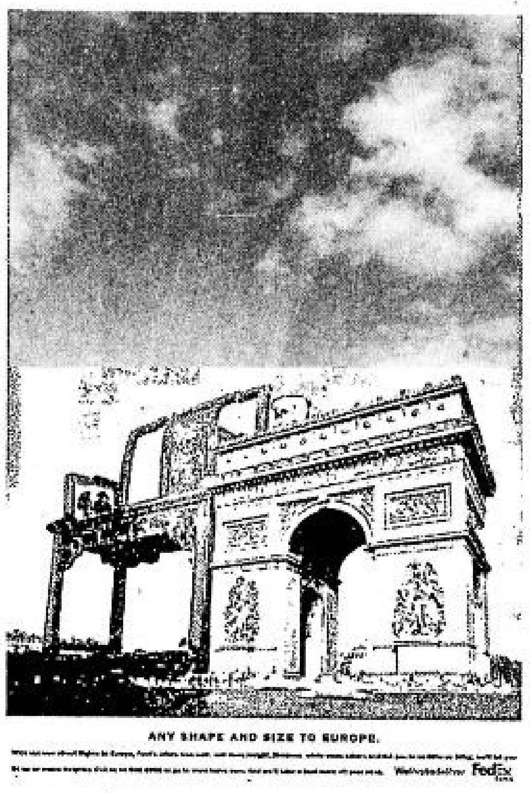
There he met his future wife, a Filipina with whom he now has a 3-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter.

Coming home

The opportunity to make his dream of living in the Philippines come true when Ogilvy & Mather said it was willing to pay him enough to restart their operations in the country.

At O&M, Guerrero was responsible for the agency's earning some of the most coveted international awards—the grand prize at the London International Awards and the country's first Clio awards.

Interestingly, talent in advertising seems to run in the family as Guerrero has two second cousins working in advertising. One is with McCann-Ericson and another in Ace Saatchi and Saatchi.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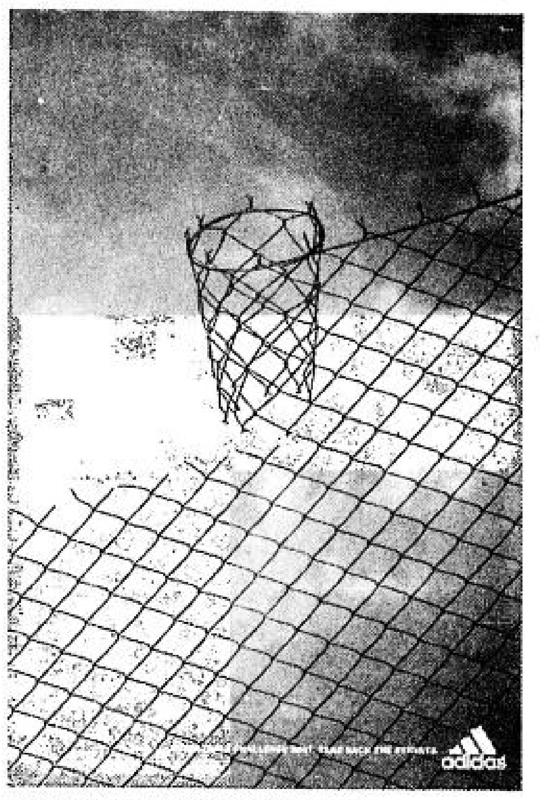
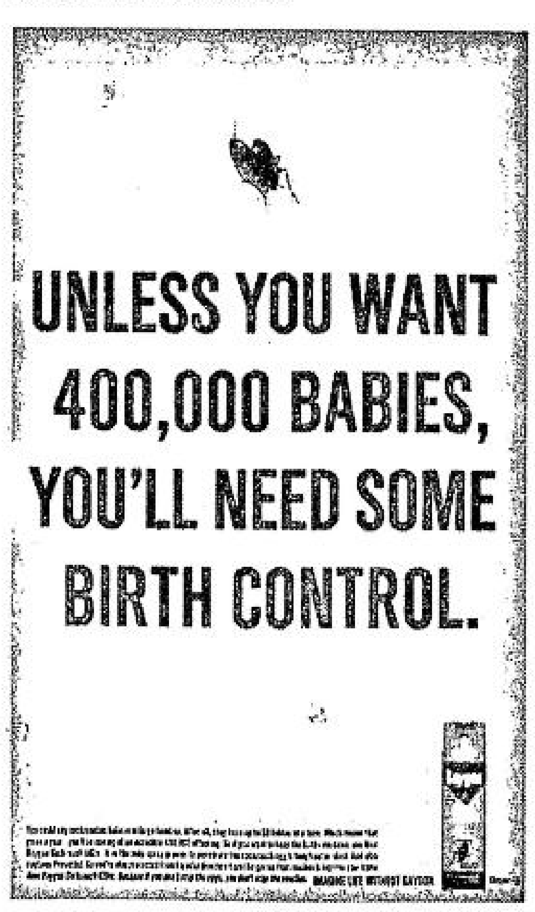
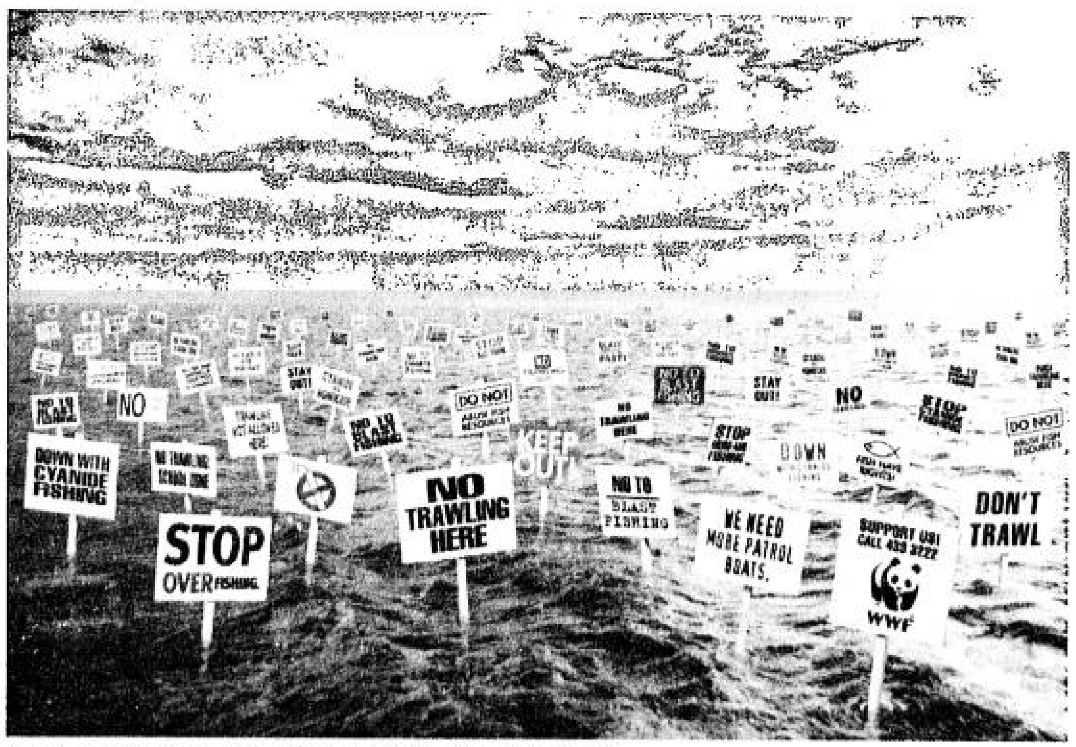


AWARD-WINNING Adidas ad



BAYGON'S winning ad



MESSAGES from the World Wildlife Fund in an ad

In 1998, Guerrero and O&M colleague Joselito Ortega formed their own advertising firm under a joint venture with advertising giant BBDO. This year, the firm is expected to have completed 30 television commercials.

To consumers, they are best known for the ads of Baygon on cockroach eggs and ads of Pepsi, including the one featuring Donita Rose.

Now airing are its Granny Goose Tortillos commercial (with the girl meeting a boy in an art gallery), and the Visa television ad starring "Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon" actress Zhang Ziyi.

Guerrero says he's very proud of Visa's latest commercial that kicks off its regional campaign. "It's a demonstration of what we've been trying to say, that you can do great work anywhere in the world, the Philippines is no exception," he stresses.

In "Dining Out," Zhang plays a diner who, after an innocent comment about the saltiness of the soup, finds herself besieged by an angry chef and a mob of hostile waiters. She defends herself from the villains with comic martial arts maneuvers, flies across the ceiling, swings on chandeliers—and ultimately whips out a Visa card to mark her grand exit.

To his knowledge, "Dining Out" is one of the biggest most visible productions to come out of the Philippines.

Award-winning ads

Although 20 percent of BBDO/Guerrero Ortega's revenues come from overseas clients and appears bent on winning ads, Guerrero says the firm doesn't want to be seen as a *"sosyal"* agency.

It, however, will always benchmark itself with the best in the global market place.

How did he come up with his award-winning ideas? Guerrero responds, "You find out as much as you can about the product, combine that with your knowledge and intuition of the market. Make sure you're not doing the same thing as the competition then craft it to the highest possible standards."

"We measure ourselves against the toughest international competitions like Cannes. We're aiming for work that will compare well anywhere in the world," he says. For him and the firm, it's the work that matters more than the money.

He notes that Filipino ads tend to fail in the execution although the ideas behind them are more often than not superior than those in other countries.

Guerrero says his challenges are to win more international awards and place the Philippines on the world advertising map.

With his experience working here and abroad, Guerrero seems all set to make more conquests.

But while he seems to have grasped the essentials of a great ad, he believes there are some things he may never learn. Up to now, he still doesn't know why ads show watches set at 10 past 10.

BUSINESS *Friday*

Margie Quimpo-Espino, Business Features Editor

Why do watch ads set the time at 10 past 10?

By Elena R. Torrijos

DAVID Guerrero, founding chair and executive creative director of advertising firm BBDO/Guerrero Ortega, is making his mark in Philippine history.

In just three years, the local BBDO unit has already been recognized as one of the "Top 20 Hottest Agencies in South East Asia" by regional trade publication Campaign Brief Asia.

He created the country's first winner at the Clio Awards, the Oscars of the advertising world.

It also garnered the most number of awards, over 100, in the last Araw Awards, the equivalent of the Oscars in Philippine advertising.

Guerrero is the only child of the late author, translator and diplomat Leon Ma. Guerrero. David was born and raised in the United Kingdom where his father was assigned for a long time. It wasn't until he was 18 years old that he set foot on the Philippines.

Journalistic notions

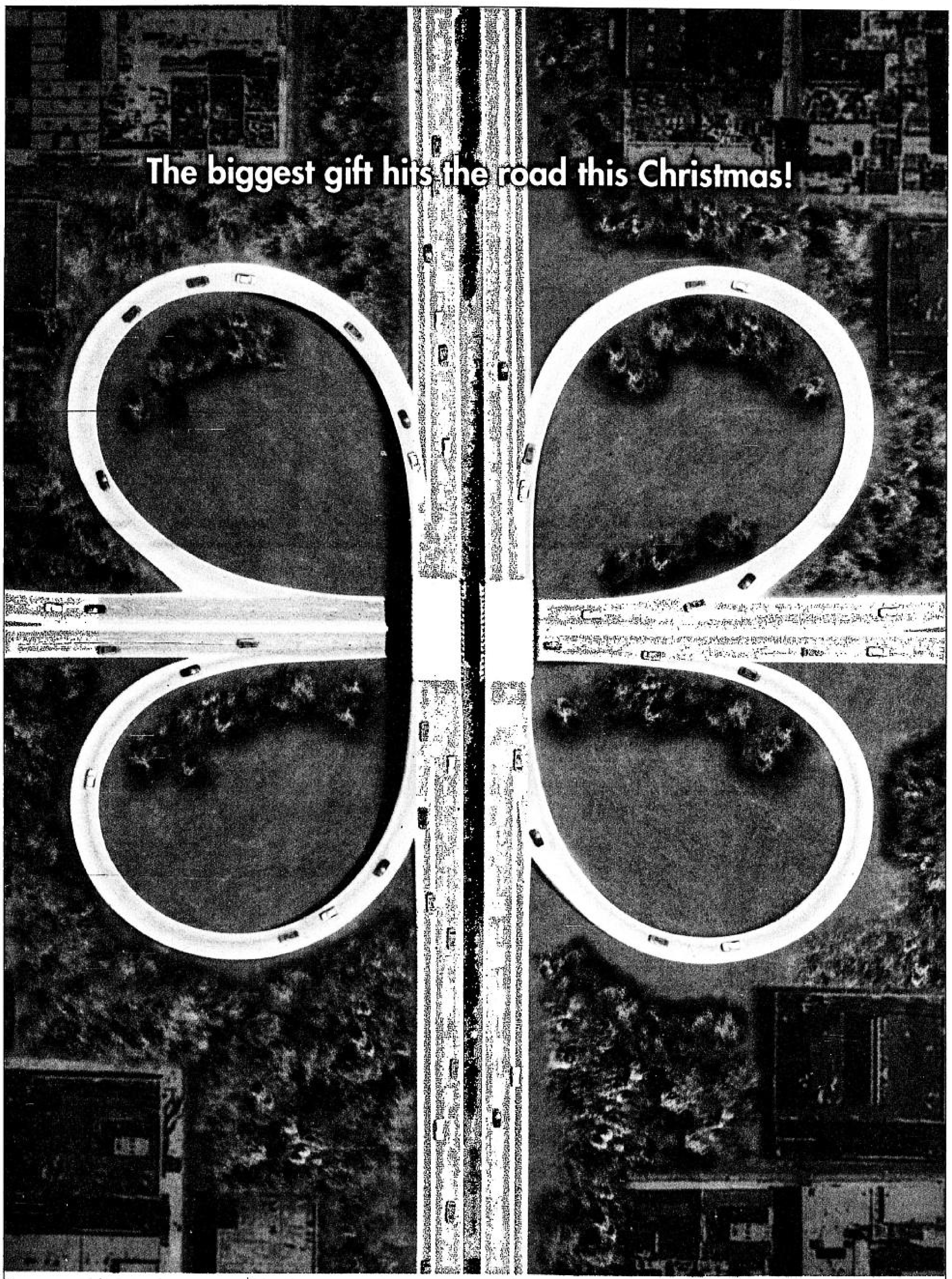
"It was always my ambition to come here," he points out. He says he often pondered, "How could I live in the country and support myself?"

Initially, he tried being a journalist.

"I took up international relations in

WHY/B23

"**CROUCHING** Tiger, Hidden Dragon" actress Zhang Zlyi and creative genius David Guerrero.



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New cutting edge campaign to sell knives

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MARKETING STRATEGY

WHEN Star Paper Corp. took over the local distribution rights of one of the world's oldest and biggest selling knives in 1995, its biggest challenge was to build up brand awareness for Zwilling J.A. Henckels.

SPC senior product manager Winston Chua says the majority of Filipinos ask for Solingen as if it was a brand when they look for high-quality knives and scissors.

Solingen is actually a town in Germany known for making the best knives in the world. Chua says most Filipinos associated high-quality knives with Solingen especially in the 1960s when Singer began its aggressive marketing campaign in the country with sewing machines that had top-grade scissors marked Solingen in their drawers.

Chua says the Zwilling Henckels deserved to be displayed and gawked at so Star Paper buckled down to work by picking choice sites in the country's leading shopping malls as showrooms for their fine products.

It also expanded the line-up to nearly 10 times what was offered by the previous local distributor to include not only knives and scissors but also flatware and manicure tools.

Zwilling Henckels did the rounds of food expositions and product demonstrations in order to showcase the good points of their knives and scissors that could only be fully appreciated when used.

Six years after building the first local Zwilling Henckels showroom at SM Megamall, Chua says more Filipinos have become connoisseurs in knives and scissors.

He says Zwilling Henckels' high standards in quality, safety and sanitary requirements give it the edge over other knives in the market.

Its other branches are in Glorietta 4, Power Plant Mall, Alabang Town Center, Robinsons Place Manila, and SM City Manila.

Sales have been growing in twin-digit levels in the past years and this year will be no different despite the economic slump as turnover is likely to grow 30 percent.

Chua says their robust sales mirrored the boom in creative cooking in the Philippines as seen from the deluge of TV programs devoted to cooking and recipe books that hog the bookstores' shelves.

Chua adds that a good kitchen would not be complete without a set of knives, which is the most important tool in this part of the house.

Chua says most of their clients are people who spend their leisure time in the kitchen. They give equal importance to having fresh and quality ingredients with having the right knife for snipping and peeling or decorating such as scalloped edge for hard crusts or hollow-ground edge for wafer-thin slices.

Chua even went overseas to get immersed in Zwilling Henckels' world-renowned technology developed since the 17th century.

The German company introduced the use of three different kinds of steel in one knife, the MagnaDur coating and its Friodur process—a special ice-hardening process which produces extremely tough blades which remain sharp and have optimum protection against corrosion.

While their products are priced at a premium, Chua says most of their buyers think of Zwilling Henckels as good investments because of their durability (no rust or corrosion) and they stay sharp for a longer time.

"It might cost the same as getting a China-made knife and changing them whenever they get dull. But a Zwilling Henckels can last for more than a generation. A constant companion and you can't put a price on that," Chua says.

After penetrating the high-end market, Chua adds that they were now planning to introduce Zwilling Henckels to the downmarket through a more affordable line—Zwilling International (it uses the single man logo in contrast to the Zwilling Henckels twin man badge).

"Much like Armani with the Armani Exchange (A/X) line," Chua says.

Chua says the new product line would be sold in their showrooms but Star Paper plans to bring the products closer to their target market by making them available in leading department stores in the country.

ZWILLING J.A. HENCKELS
SOLINGEN

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CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ■ MARGE C. ENRIQUEZ, Subsection Editor

At home and in style in the vernacular

Yola Perez Johnson works around Filipino materials, lines, colors and inspirations. She's the most down-home of interior designers

ELISA Reyes designed the Shogi screen in *buntal* fiber, available exclusively from the Sou Mak collection. The patina brass curtain holder was designed by Yola.

By Avie Gochoco-Perez
Contributor
Photos by Chito Vecina
VISUAL CONCEPT BY ALBERT AVELLANA

YOLA Perez Johnson's work on a suite at One Roxas Triangle in Makati boldly uses Filipino materials, lines and colors. Yet, the drama of it all does not blind: the vision is one of practical grandness, of utilitarian chic.

"This isn't me," she isn't afraid to say. But it is perhaps only to kick home the point that her clients' taste and needs took centerstage in that suite. Her design, her materials and her colors shaped these tastes and needs into the useful, artistic home space the clients now enjoy. All that, despite her claim that she's "not an interior designer. I'm an artist."

Yola's artistry in the suite starts with handwoven abaca, her favorite material, that goes on the floor, and combined with linen, goes on the windows and beds. The abaca rug is hand-woven in her patented "binding weave" style to fit into the living room. Quite unusually, by design, the colors of the hemp run from dark to light.

Upon entering the suite, Yola comes upon the binding-weave abaca rug at the end of a longish hallway. As mother knows her own child, so she immediately sees the need to rid the rug of slack. With help, she lifts the console table weighing down one end of the rug, and tamps the slack away gently with a shod foot. One could almost hear her sigh "there," satisfied at last. Large paintings by Jonathan Olazo and Gus Albor look down on the Yola Johnson masterpiece that is the living, dining and family rooms of the suite.

Focus

Piedra china and almaciga wood are wedded to produce an earthy, one-of-a-kind coffee table that is the focus of the living room. It is an artistically beautiful, grand piece where the rough coldness of stone sets off the smoothness, the warmth of the almaciga. Yola likes to play with materials, with textures, designing them into useful images that only an artist's mind can conjure.

Delicate *buntal* fiber on the shoji screens delineates the cozy family room from the more formal dining area. Ceiling-to-floor abaca weave curtains in not-quite-fuchsia and not-quite-maroon—"Florentine Red," says Yola—frame the family room windows to the skyscraper horizon of Makati. Here, a large coffee table wrapped in finely handwoven *banig* anchors the room.

Restful, clean lines set the tone in the master bedroom. Abaca with linen hand-woven fabric softens the strong, solid lines of the *kamagong* four-poster bed. "Abaca can be as thin as silk or gauze, and as thick as a rug," Yola offers. Backlit shoji screens line a wall of the master suite. One might say linen closets have never been this elegant.

In the little girl's room, a pair of jeans lies carelessly on the carpeted floor, just beside the bed. A tyke, after all, lives in this room. Yola makes no move to pick up the jeans to make for a

AT HOME/ p.C6

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

JOLINA LIVE!

Catch teen sensation Jolina Magdangal when she takes center stage to promote her latest album from Star Records, Panaginip: Platinum Hits Collection.

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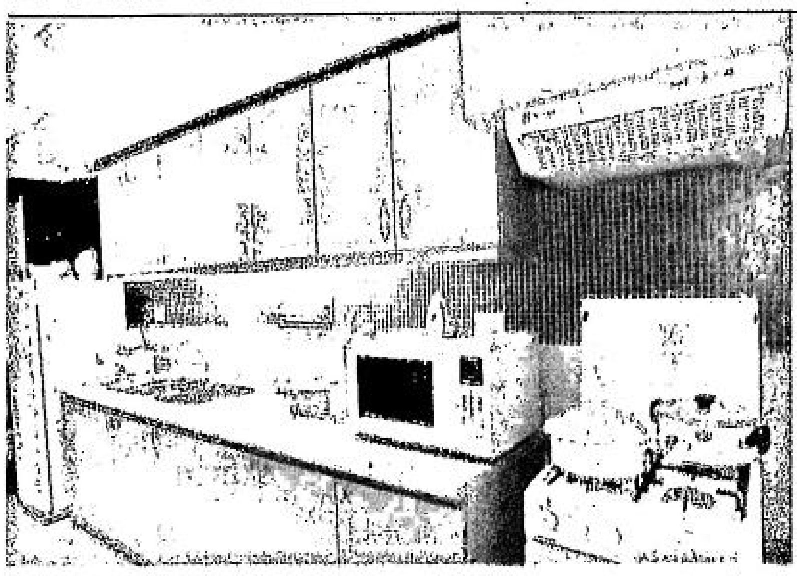
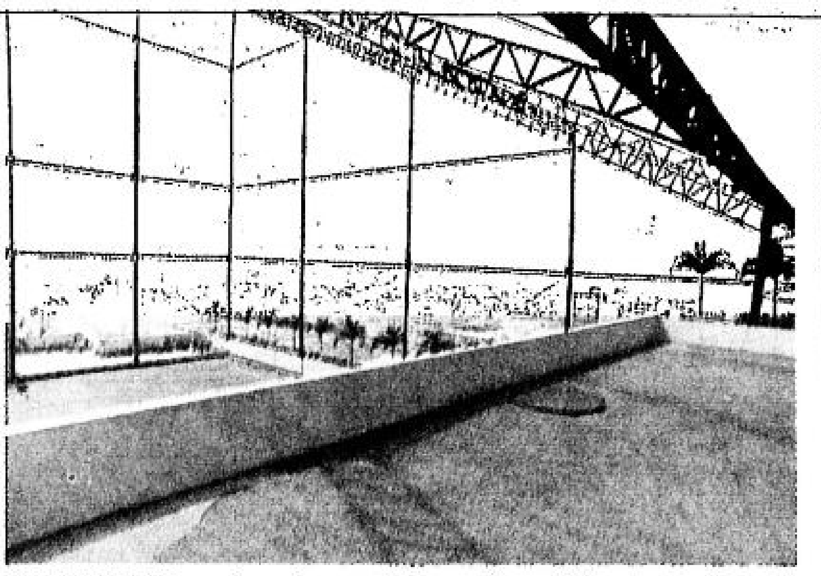


KITCHENS at Pioneer Highlands residences are compact and efficient, with cooking conveniences easily accessible.



ON ELEVATED portion of recreation area is a driving range, the only one of its kind in the country located in a condominium complex.

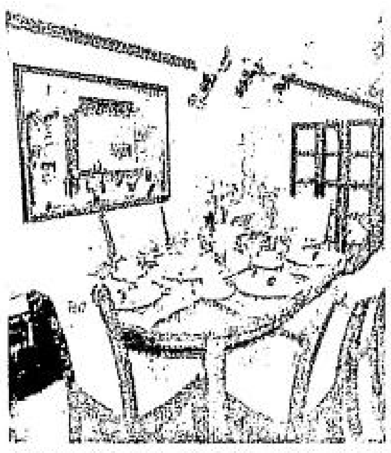
LIVING room on Madison Suites' 20th floor is a picture of comfort-plus with L-shaped sofa-armchair arrangement. Wall-length window overlooks Edsa-Pasig view.

Multiple use as a lifestyle principle

By Doris G. Nuyda

CONGESTION and traffic are the perennial problems of Metro Manila, and they are especially felt wherever people live and work. But developers and space planners have found the solution to this. They are now building high-rise structures that combine office and commercial spaces with residential units, each complementing the other.

Through this multi-use principle, residents don't have to go too far off to shop or exercise since those services are available, literally, at their doorstep. Conversely, employees can choose to take up residence in the same building where they work, saving them time, money and commuters' stress. Indeed, some employees have started doing just this by pooling their resources to share a unit.



DINING area on this 20th floor unit sits six. Wall mirror reflects view of kitchen opposite.

A standout example of such a solution is Pioneer Highlands, a complex composed of three buildings, referred to as towers, each 42 stories high, 32 of them residential units, the 10 lower floors devoted to business offices and services. The division is highlighted by the two commercial Plazas that bear the name of the company occupying them (Globe Telecom).

The towers, identified as East Tower, West Highlands and Madison Suites, now stand as landmarks in their location, a strategic one on the corner of Pioneer and Madison Streets in Mandaluyong City, a convenient corridor between Metro Manila's busiest districts—Ayala Avenue in Makati and Ortigas Avenue in Pasig. Madison, developed earliest, houses upscale units and sets the pace for Pioneer Highlands lifestyles.

Amenity and mobility

The towers not only offer amenities that residents refer to as "the pleasures of hotel luxuries in the comfort of our home," they also allow easily mobility and accessibility from residence to workplace and from one city area to another. They are not just homes or places of work. They are also arcades with shops and services often just an elevator ride away.

The amenities in the residential units include the housekeeping services that come with occupancy. They are cleaning and laundry service and maintenance of utilities, as well as a daycare center and kid-safe playground.

Sports buffs can take their time off on the roof deck (between the eighth and ninth floors where a whole playground is available to them). Here they can practice their golf driving in an eight-slot driving range, the only condominium in the heart of the metropolis that considers the needs of city-based golf aficionados! They can take a dip in a 25-meter pool, or work out in a fitness gym, or sink in the balls on Brunswick billiard tables, or try the lanes at an official 10-pin bowling alley. Runners can do their daily jog on a rubberized running track that goes around this recreation area.

Pioneer Highlands combines office and commercial spaces with residential units in order to make livelihood and living complement one another

Security is maintained at all times, restricting entry or exit of unauthorized persons to residential units. Each unit, moreover, has its own security video phone with which visitors may be easily identified.

RECREATION area, sprawling between the three towers, boasts of a 25-meter pool.

Proof

With all these facilities available for comfort plus, the proof of the pudding, as the saying goes, is still in the eating. One gets a good idea of what life really can be in this Pioneer-Madison address from the model units designed by architect Beth Bernardo and interior designer Ossie Abelada.

One unit we visited on the 20th floor of Madison Suites measures 117 sq m, has three bedrooms (excluding helper's quarters), four bathrooms and a laundry room.

One enters through a small hallway, a four-panel screen dividing it from the dining room which sits six. Opposite is the kitchen framed by a bar-counter with stools.

Beyond is the living room furnished with a beige sofa and matching armchair, both made extra cozy with plump pillows. Facing this seating arrangement is a console for a TV set. The living room window faces the busy Edsa-Pasig landscape.

On the ninth floor of the same building is a similar but smaller unit with two bedrooms, three baths, living and dining areas. A pendant halogen lamp defines the dining room for four. Lending spatial effect here is a wall-length mirror and a glass shelf underneath. A zebra rug in the living room sets an exciting tone to the area, which opens up to a pocket terrace overlooking the busy street scene below and which allows fresh breezes to waft in.

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Christmas @2001

Shop Expo

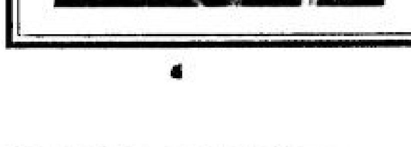
It was the best way to start the month of December during the Chrsitmas@2001 Shop Expo at the World Trade Center last December 1 and 2. With Christmas being exactly 25 days away, Cut Unlimited, the event organizers, pooled together over 160 entrepreneurs to feature their wares and products to thousands of excited shoppers.

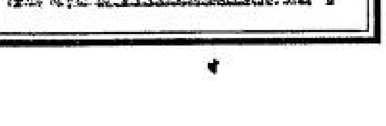
The Opening Ceremonies were hosted by GMA Network personalities, Miriam Quiambao and Hans Montenegro and were highlighted by the ballet dance number by the Velarde Group and a song number by Pinky Marquez. Dr. Quintin S. Doromal, Executive Director of Banatayog ng mga Bayani Foundation delivered the inspiration message to shed light on the projects. Special guests also included Mr. Kenny Nuyda, AVP for Advertising of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ms. Pearl Doromal, Chaiperson of the Bantayog Memorial.

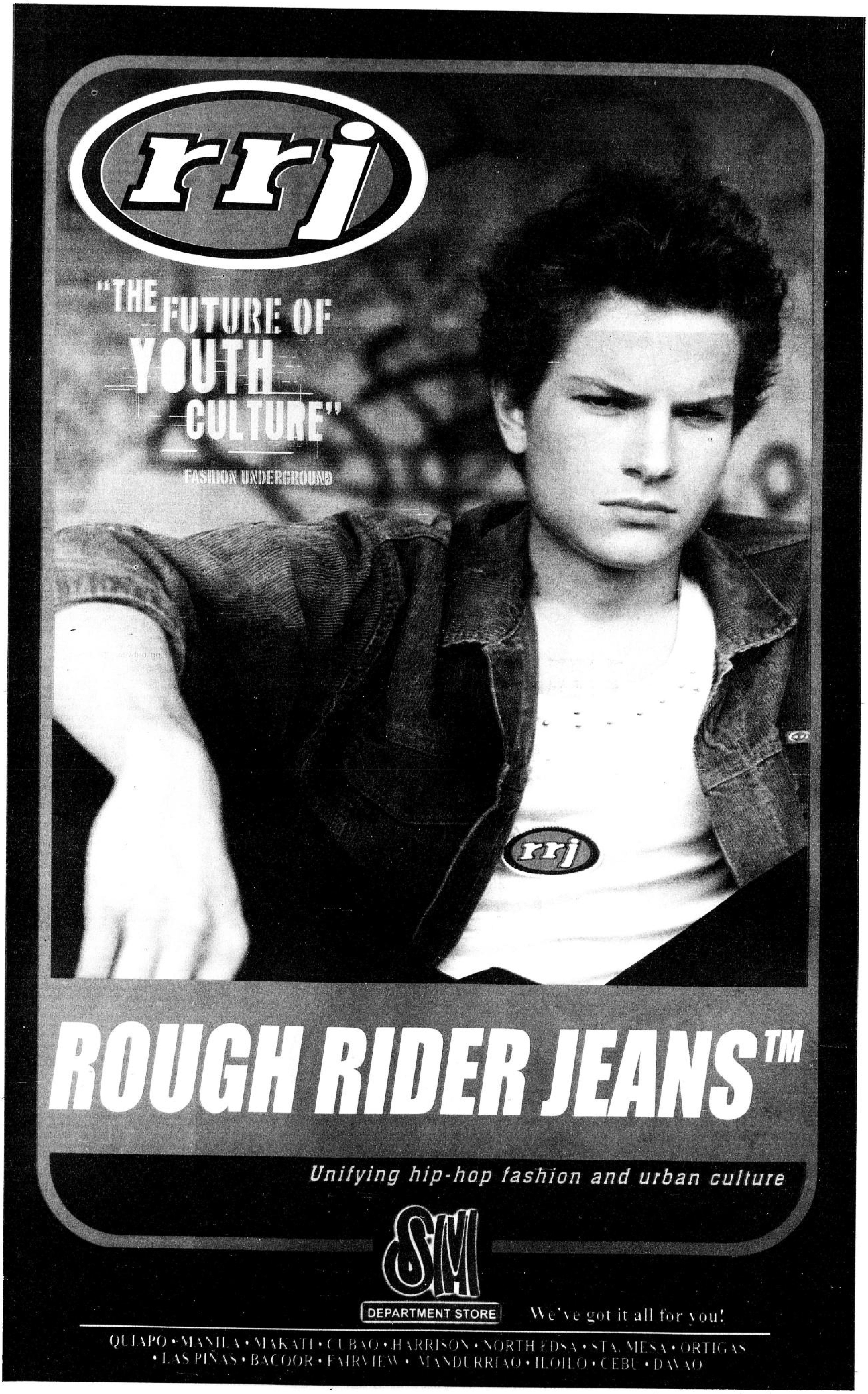
As the venue formally opened to visitors from around the metropolis, proven crowd favorites included the trendiest designs of NUI Fashion Design, the Chinese-inspired bags and totes of M2C, the home furnishings of Home Inspiration and Georgani, the wines and cheeses of Europa Deli, the aromatherapy accessories of Cornerstone and the jams of Wonderworks Kitchen.

What makes the affair even more splendid is its aim to support the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation and its cause of mounting the "Heroes and Martyrs Memorial" on the corner of EDSA and Quezon Avenue and starting a scholarship fund for children-martyrs left behind. Made possible through the partnership of GMA Network and Cali along with Grepalife Assurance Corp., Pacific Plans, Pearl of the Pacific, INQ-7 and the Lifestyle Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

For your last shopping hurrah, the same cause will be staging the NOEL Christmas Bazaar at the Manila Polo Club on December 15-16 where the best items for the season have been gathered and selected. For inquiries, call CUT at 620-4328 or email: eventsonly@edsamail.com.ph.



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An open letter to Santa Claus

By Jose Javier Reyes
Contributor

DEAR Santa Claus,

Let's put our cards on the table before we start anything here.

I feel ridiculous—no, maybe depraved is a better term—writing this letter to you. Even in my younger and more vulnerable days, I never gave you much thought. It's this whole schtick about flying reindeers that truly disturbed me. There is nothing graceful about these mammals in flight, with or without those sleigh bells.

Even in the '60s, there wasn't much room for fantasies especially since legend has it that you squeeze and slither down chimneys to deliver your gifts to all the pink, chubby, goody-two-shoes sleeping tots of the world. You see, in my Third World tropical country, we don't find chestnuts roasting on the open fire. The installation of a chimney in a house can either mean the height of tackiness or the product of the demented imagination of an architect/ interior designer or an even sicker homeowner who still believes that one day the Philippines will have a white Christmas.

I remember asking my father how you got into the house with your oodles and oodles of gifts (although to this day I never forgave you for not giving me the exact gift I wanted) under our Christmas tree. My father came up with some lame excuse that I, as a precocious 6-year-old and to this very day, refused to accept. Hey, Claus, you couldn't have used a jack to mangle the iron grills of our windows just to dump a Junior Chemistry set that I got tired of after a grand total of five minutes. If you went through all that trouble just to give me a particularly boring gift, then let me tell you approximately four decades later that it was not ever and never worth it.

Something wrong

So you're probably asking—why am I writing this letter? To tell you frankly, Claus, I don't know.

> Christmas wishes: stoppage of production of Hypocrite Dolls, Sanctimonious Stuffed Toys and even Grandstanding Granny Squish Toys

Maybe it is because I never ever wrote you a letter when I was of that age when it was an infinitely cute and charming thing to do. This may suggest a premature form of senility, but I am sure you would be the first to understand. I mean, for someone who has made a lifetime career out of making toys the whole year round and not dumping them for export to capitalize on the inexhaustible hunger of toddlers to have the latest in everything, there must be something wrong with you. Instead, you allegedly give them to kids the world over.

The weird part is that after all these years, you haven't used your legendary largesse, benevolence and annual self-promotion to get into politics. Or direct high-profile nation-building films for the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Pardon my very parochial view of altruism, Claus, but in my country, anyone who makes a big ado about handing out goodies to the less fortunate, the lonely and the destitute is subject to suspicion. Anyone who puffs an echoing "Ho-ho-ho" must either be jockeying for media attention or starting a one-man crusade to earn substantial notice. It is either they are running for mayor or councilor in the next elections or their social/ professional careers are in dire need of photo-ops, talk show guest spots or just your everyday quota of public attention.

Not even Bill Gates has exhibited a dedicated and determined generosity although he does not have your advantage of having non-salaried elves tinkering around a toy workshop. I wouldn't know who has it better—you or Bill—you with your elves or Bill with his geeks. It doesn't matter. It is beside the point. At least I am certain that Bill doesn't entertain kids on their laps while asking them if they've been good the whole year round. And I also imagine Bill's private jet runs faster than your platoon of reindeer even if they were under the influence of the most potent uppers ever peddled by a North Pole drug pusher.

Christmas wishes

Maybe I am writing to you—finally—because I have a bunch of Christmas wishes you may want to consider. Let's just skip the Chemistry set and stick to what I want because this coming Christmas is certainly going to be full of so much wanting. Let's also gloss over the request for toys because I am not quite sure if it is proper for me to ask for a Ford Expedition or a Roadtrek to make the season really gay and bright.

Knowing how you think, you must be wrinkling your stubby frost-bitten nose and mumbling, "Ho-ho-ho! I only work for kids." Perhaps you can still reconsider by seeing the inner child in me.

Claus, you can truly make my Christmas (as well as so many others') very happy if you can do something about the things happening around me.

Let's start with the politicians, both local and national. Yes, I know, I know. Throughout your entire career, you have never been political or partisan. You clam up in your enclave, giving orders to your wife and workers and don't give a hoot about what's happening beyond your horizon of ice. I always imagined that the whole year round after doing your annual deliveries you putter around the house, leave instructions on Post-Its stuck all over that warm and comfortable residence of yours so that the elves can go back supplying Toys R' Us. You must listen to cool, relaxing music, maybe Frank Sinatra or Enya or, God forbid, the Carpenters' Christmas album the whole year round.

But the point is that you don't watch ANC, BBC or CNN in the North Pole. I mean, for all you care, right?

You wouldn't understand this plea for help to pluck out à la Rapture some of our national and local politicians and turn them into your slave-labor elves in the workshop. Well, yes, I do anticipate your apprehension considering that they will freeze their nipples off if they have to insist on wearing their Chiffonelle *barongs* out there in the distant north. But maybe they will have more use out there, making toys and feeding the reindeer rather than uprooting roads, building pedestrian flyovers and even bus stops just to have their names painted on a billboard announcing to the world that these are their projects for the benefit of their constituents. Ho-ho-ho!

Out there in your workshop while they assemble Little Drummer Boys or live-action toys based on the next edition of the "Star Wars" prequel, they can learn a lesson or two about doing real work rather than being obsessed with scoring *pogi* points. Maybe they can finally learn what selflessness really means and, through the sub-zero temperature they have to endure, they can also learn about nobility of heart.

Getting along

Another thing. Maybe they can all get along together out there in the North Pole where there is absolutely no use for their bodyguards, their flashy cars and their endless bickering. As conveyor belt elves, they may yet learn the value of cooperation and be humbled enough to realize that the country can run without them or their ilk.

By your sheer volume you are a substantial authority figure so you can put a rest to their passion for name-calling, backstabbing, maneuvering and manipulating. Humbled by manual labor, they can really start to work rather than believe that they are truly working while bashing and nudging each other out of the circle of public credibility.

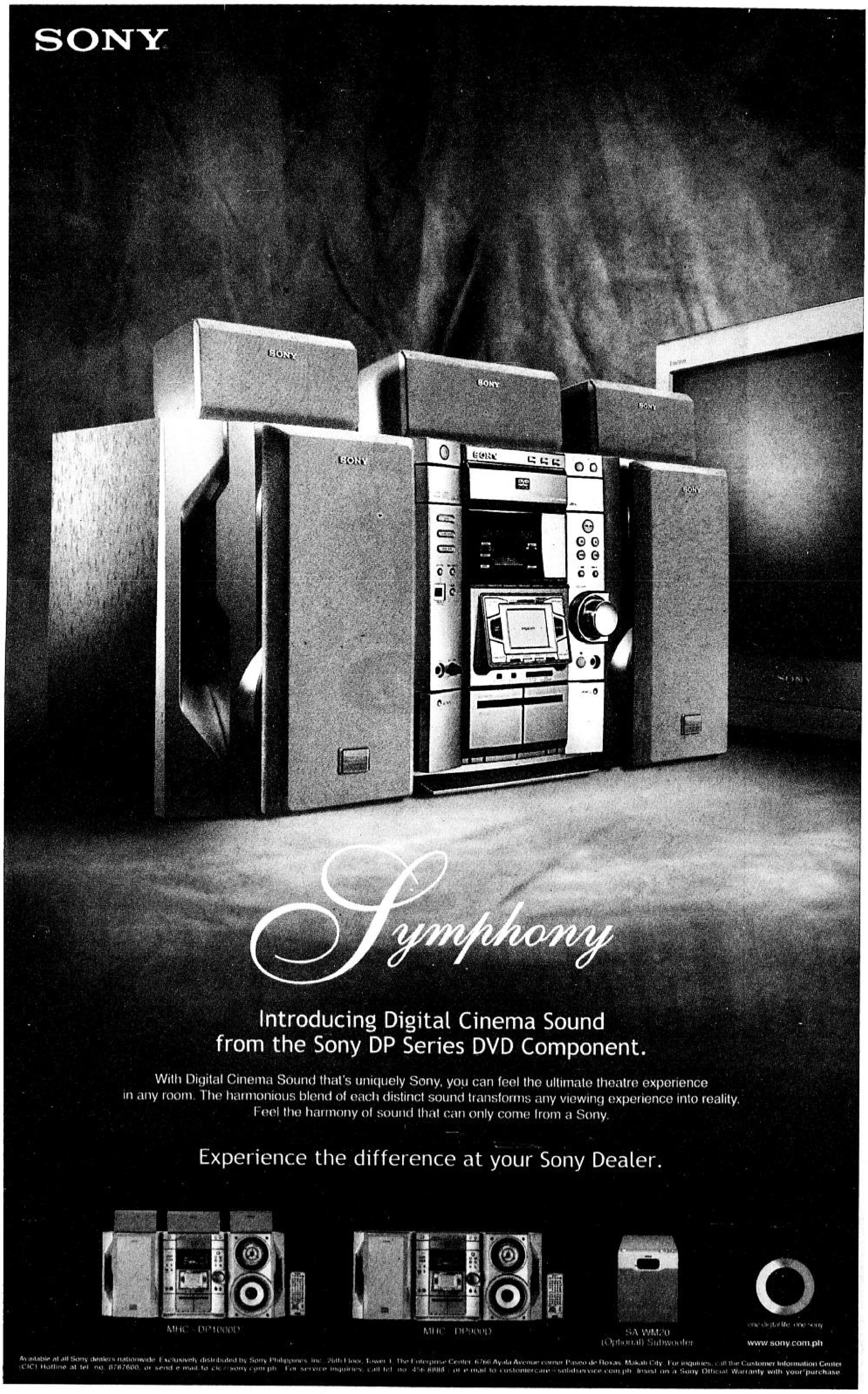
Hopefully, Claus, they can learn your time-tested system of insuring productivity. I mean, hey, you never missed on your deliveries each year, right? Regardless of what is happening, you still get the job done. And, boy, some of these Feeling Big Guys can really pick up a trick or two from a Really Big Guy like you. I think you can give really good lessons on the art and skills of governance than any law school or short-term seminars on how to motivate people to work for a common good. You are a man of a few words. As far as I remember, if it is not your tri-syllable laugh, all you ever mutter is "Merry Christmas!" Now that is impressive. Minimal yak, maximum efficiency.

Can you make life-size, life-like toys like that and send a whole bunch to my country? We certainly are in dire need of such specimens for role models. We can even call them P.I. Joes.

Okay. I can get carried away with a much longer list of wishes that include the stoppage of production of Hypocrite Dolls, Sanctimonious Stuffed Toys and even Grandstanding Granny Squish Toys. We have an oversupply of that sort of stuff out here. I think you can also spare us of the usual Vienna sausage-beef-pork-and-beans-instant-noodles-plus-a-handful-of-rice gift bags being distributed in depressed areas to warrant a good old *feliz Navidad.* Those have become so boringly predictable. I limit my Christmas wish to what I feel is the raw essential.

I know what you're thinking, Claus. I am asking for a miracle. But, hey, I am a Filipino, remember? I thrive on miracles—God-sent or simply imagined—as my anesthesia. And, yes, I tried to be good the whole year round. Believe me, I tried.

JOEY



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GOODIES from the sea fill the shelves at Fish and Things.

Boutique brings to surface beauty of marine world

FISH and Things, a unique theme boutique, brings to the surface the beauty of the sea and its inhabitants in all their vividness and splendor.

Cousins Bernice Palanca-Go and Anna Joaquin, distinguished designers who both love diving, conceptualized a specialty gift store showcasing the breathtaking beauty of the underwater world. Unique and unusual items, in the cousins' original designs, fill the shelves of Fish and Things.

Items are suitable for homes, offices or as corporate giveaways and wedding souvenirs. They include coffee-table décor, lamps, picture frames, bathroom curtains, wind chimes, candles, refrigerator magnets, placemats, carved stones, terra-cotta table décor and lanterns for the outdoor.

The store is located at the newly opened 2/F Greenbelt Shopping Plaza, Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City, Call Fish and Things at (0917) 947-9653 and (0917) 520-9831.

Take guesswork out of cooking

TEFAL, the leader in French cookware, introduces the new cookware with Thermospot, a heat indicator, which takes the guesswork out of cooking by telling you when the pan is hot.

A thermo-sensitive pigment at the center of the pan, Thermospot is nontoxic and totally safe. It has a fine line pattern that disappears and changes to solid red when the pan reaches the optimum temperature for frying of 190°C.

With the new Tefal Thermospot you'll know exactly when the pan is hot and ready for cooking. Perfect cooking starts at P595.

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Give your kitchen positive feng shui vibes

FENG shui experts say the kitchen is the heart of the home.

The kitchen is where we plan and prepare that which nourishes us.

Sarah Shurety, author of "Feng Shui for your Home" who also runs The Feng Shui Factory, says the kitchen has a strong influence on people's finances and health. A messy kitchen be reflected in both attitudes and physical well-being.

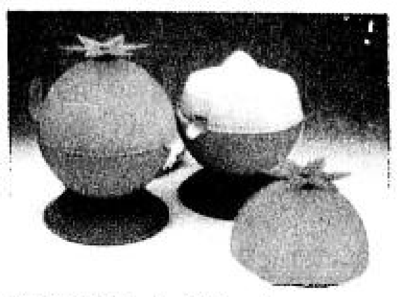
Shurety advises keeping kitchen clutter to a minimum so that the room would "have an energy that is clean, fresh and bright."

Orocan, the most popular name in household products since 1984, offers products to make it easy to follow Shurety's advice. The products make working in the kitchen fun and pleasurable as well as functional.

Some of Orocan's products have won international awards for quality such as the Golden American and Golden Europe Awards for Quality.

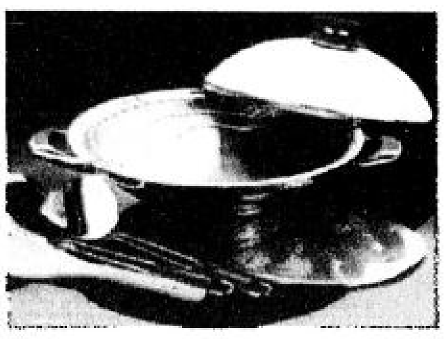
STORE OFFERS USER-FRIENDLY TOOLS

Handyman, the do-it-yourself hardware store of Robinsons, offers an assortment of user-friendly kitchen tools in addition to its extensive line of hardware products. An orange-shaped citrus juicer, unique and stylish in design, is equipped with an easy clean, nondrip valve and an integral sieve. It comes with two reamers from squeezing juice from citrus fruits of various sizes. Handyman has 32 branches nationwide.



KITCHEN tools at Handyman Stores

Cook healthful foods



AMC (Alfa Metalcraft Corp.), the No. 1 solid stainless-steel cookware in the world, brings no-oil, no-water and no-salt cooking to food enthusiasts with its latest product.

The AMC 36-cm wok comes with the Visiotherm, a visual thermometer that indicates the ideal temperature when cooking meat and vegetables, and the Audiotherm, a computer chip that acts as an alarm once the desired heat is reached, eliminating the need to open the lid.

Available for P24,900, the wok comes with other cooking accessories. Text (0917) 537-3490 or call 523-2367/2136.

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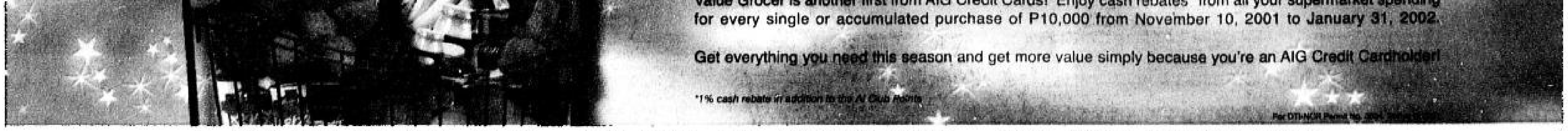

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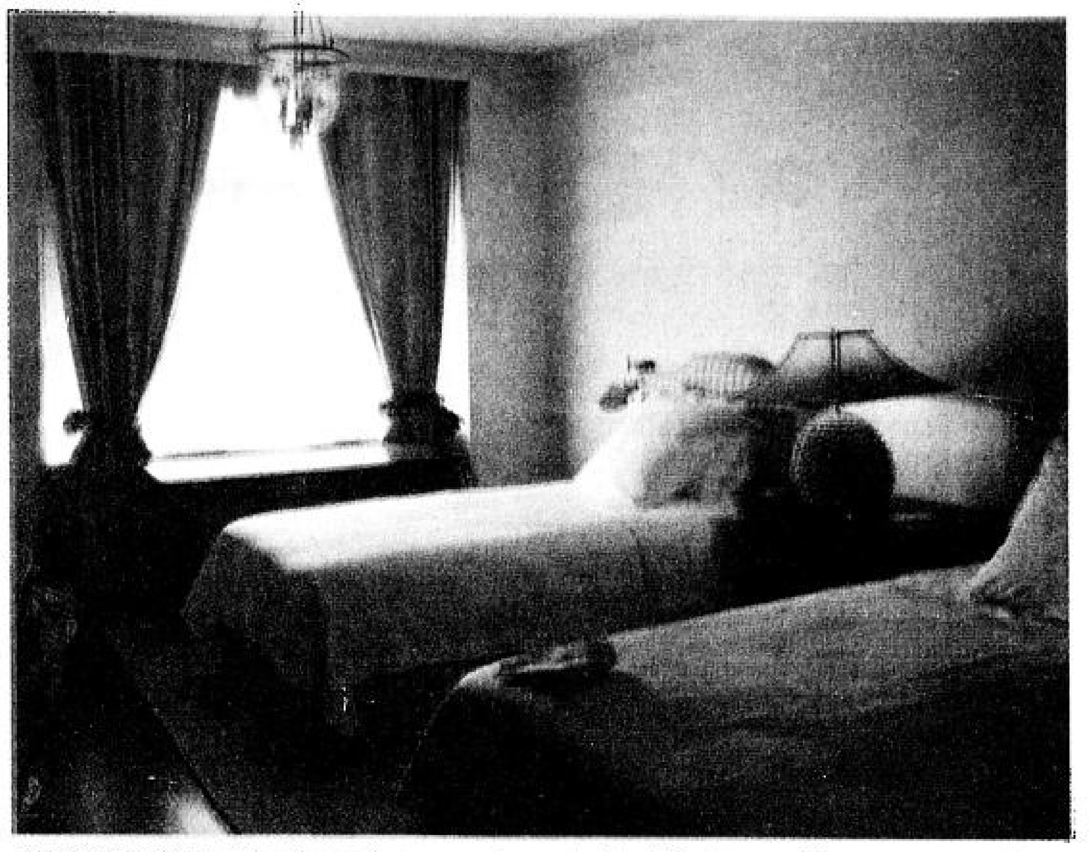
YOLA designed the raffia and abaca coffee table with narra legs, the murio bamboo-*solihiya* chair and patented binding abaca weave, a Sou Mak exclusive, on the floor. The long sofa, also from Sou Mak, has an all-natural filling of cotton, down and horsehair. Another Yola design is the bamboo candle holder with a candle shaped like a bamboo. Elisa Reyes designed the window screen of fuchsia abaca linen exclusively for Sou Mak.



AN OLD Philippine hurricane lamp complements the table lamp with *cogon*-covered base and avocado green shade by Sou Mak. Window screen is abaca linen in avocado green. The floor is covered with abaca binding weave from the Sou Mak collections (Philippine Patent No. 5336).

At home and in style in the vernacular

(From page C1)

perfect photograph. "I like my spaces lived in. I don't like them perfect."

And so she's happy with the framed photos of family and friends plopped atop the built-in shelves of the family room, or merely strewn about on surfaces the suite's owners have chosen to display them. They show that the owners have really personalized the space she has done up. She lets the photographs be, choosing to straighten up only an art piece or two on a console table.

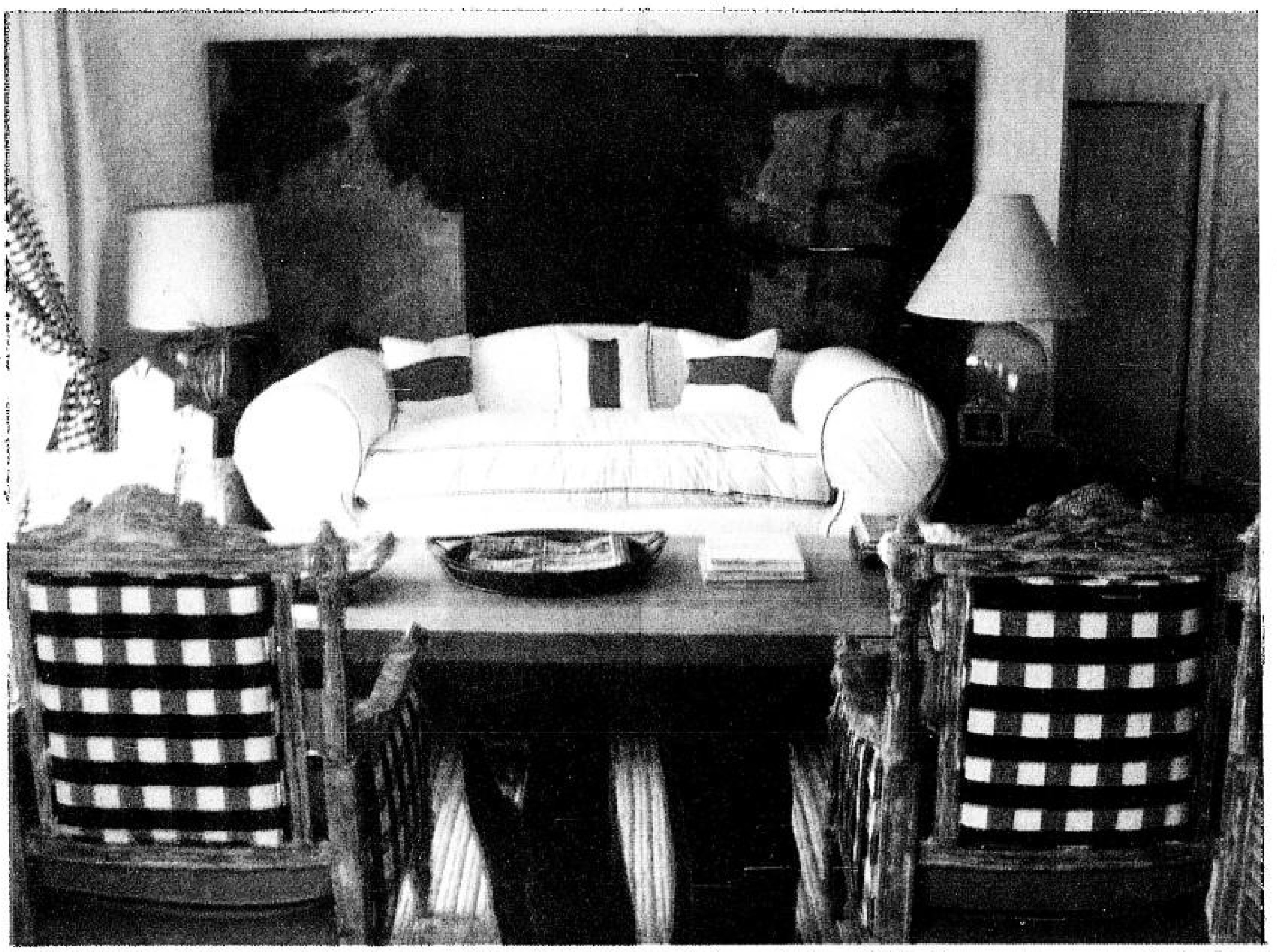
'Garbage'

Perhaps in this suite, what could best be described as Yola, the lover of primitive, natural, indigenous materials, modern and contemporary art, includes an *aparador* made of Philippine burl. "It is a mole on a tree, that which the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) rates as garbage," she points out. The suite carries Orientalia which the owners apparently prize, but the same owners apparently also share Yola's love for Philippine antiques.

Yola, who calls a '50s house in Bel-Air, Makati, home, is particularly fond of ebony-black Ifugao, Cordillera-sourced antiques. The large coffee table in her *sala* looks like it might have been an Ifugao bed in its past life. Her dining room table is lit by a wrought-iron chandelier that hangs so low from the ceiling, its bottom nearly scrapes the table. She designed it, and feels quite comfortable with it, thank you. It is lit by candles and, one imagines, weaves romantic, old-world wonders for quiet dinners.

On the other hand, the design for the wrought-iron dining table and chairs in the One Roxas Triangle suite, she volunteers, although inspired by a similar design by a foreigner, was executed by Filipino artisans. It features birds happily perched on branches and leaves, all done in wrought iron.

If Yola were to be best described today, one would have to say she is a 54-year-old Filipino artist (despite the foreign surname, owing to American husband Patrick) struggling to express herself through art that transforms Philippine indigenous materials into naturally chic, world-class items of beauty for use not only in the Filipino home but also in the international home.



A KIDNEY sofa with down, cotton and horsehair filling designed by Yola is the centerpiece of this living room arrangement in the Roxas Triangle unit in Laguna. At the back is a large, untitled Jonathan Olazo painting. A Dama Juana lamp, with abaca-linen shade, felded *kamagong* logs and mini binding abaca floor covering provide an interesting mix of textures.

ALL available at Sou Mak are the *salakot* lamp by Osmundo Esguerra, the *buntal* shogi screen by Elisa Ryes, Diego's lamp in patina brass and table with patina brass base.

'Tea house'

Her home today, unfortunately, is not a photographer's paradise. The garage and walkway to the main entrance have been claimed by stacks of Philippine antique furniture perhaps either waiting to take their place in her designer showroom Soumak in South Makati or in clients' homes. The best-selling book "Tropical Living" by Elizabeth V. Reyes features on its cover Yola's "tea house" which is a step away from her sala: it is a *bahay kubo* gazebo that has retained its rustic beauty but which, Yola pleads, has had its day in print.

The tea house is Filipino presented the cosmopolitan way: it has cushy, oversized pillows on the bamboo floors; woven abaca on the ceiling and walls; a low wicker table at the center; and candleholders here and there on the floor in metal and glass, wood and fiber.

Yola is so Filipino she takes her shoes off when she goes upstairs to freshen up for her next appointment. She is so Filipino she has not imagined herself living anywhere else but in the Philippines. She says she would miss its "tropical green" landscape, although Paris (where she lived for seven months on a grant to study museum procurement procedures) and New York might merit some thought.

Yola is so Filipino she is affected by the dip in the country's, nay, worldwide economic activity. Soumak stuff is not moving as well today in her main export market, the United States, she frowns. Yet, she is also so Filipino that she is not allowing this setback to upset the economic picture for her workers: to help them survive, she continues to give them designs to weave, to carve, to dream about for the next meal.

For example, a large bed in Soumak has hundreds of roses intricately carved into the 30-year-old *narra* wood of the headboard and footboard. The bed is painted in the distressed pinkish-ivory color identified with Soumak products. Yola's workers offered to do the carving, work that took them two months to finish. Their need to eke out a living, after all, dovetails with Yola's mission to wed the creation of things of beauty with the financial independence she seeks to give her workers.

Happy cause

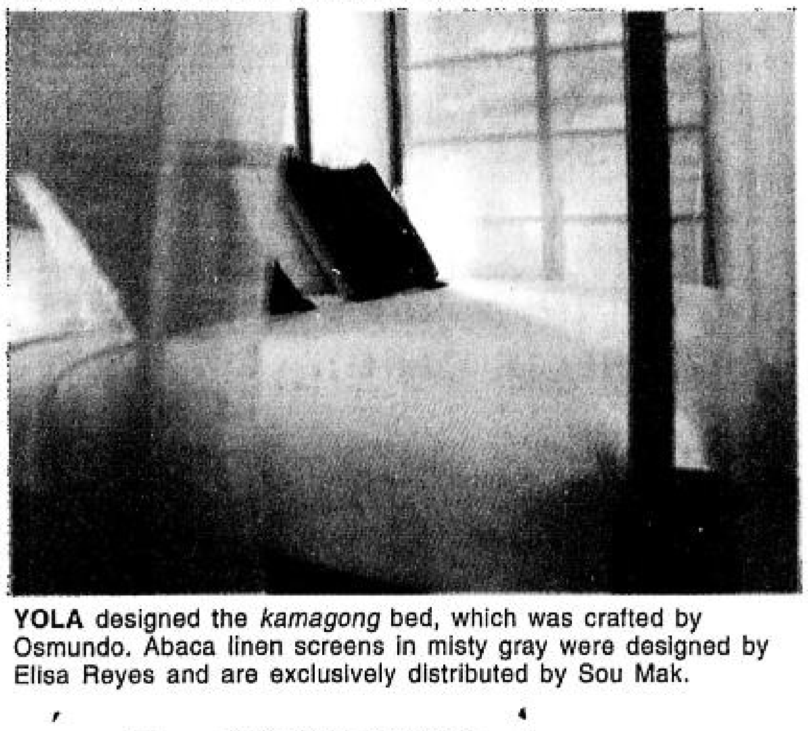
What makes Yola happy these days, however, is a resthouse that is going up in Mindoro and may be ready by next year. Designed by architect-daughter Popi Laudico, it is a stone and thatch affair and made completely from indigenous materials, among them Mindoro marble.

"It's in the mountains," she says, her face lighting up. "It is a dwelling place. It's heaven for me. Patrick discovered Mindoro. He is even thinking of getting buried there."

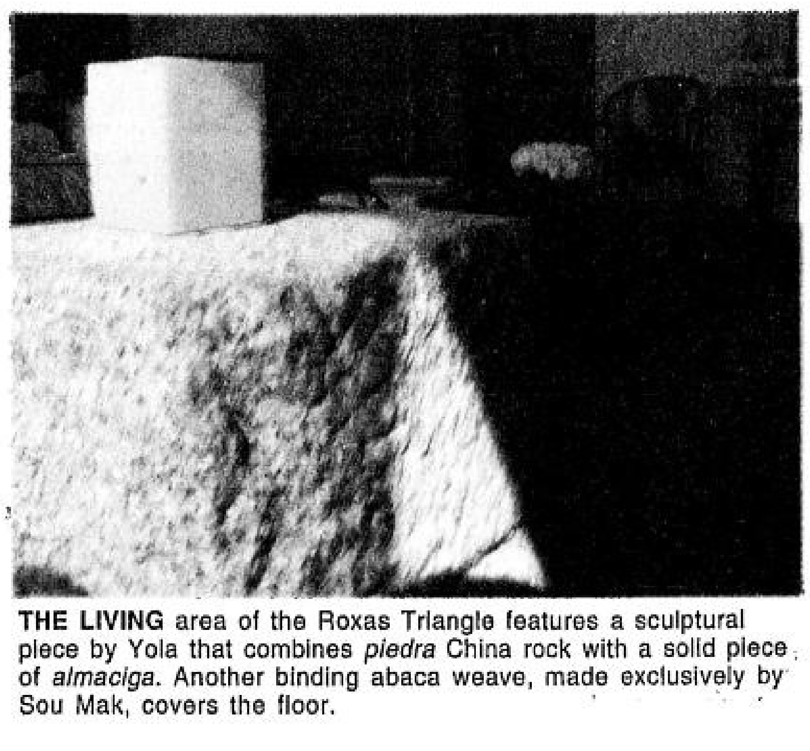
Meantime, Yola continues to look for "space to be able to imagine, express… being an artist is something that you can't measure. Being an artist is a label and I shy away from labels although we cannot live without them. You have to define who you are. But I am continually in search of that elusive thing called happiness. I have my moments of unhappiness, too."

How does she want her work to be known? "The art that came about because of a need to reach out to an audience, to be able to show them that ordinary things can be beautiful. You can say it's 'found art.' I find the material and I make it into an art piece."

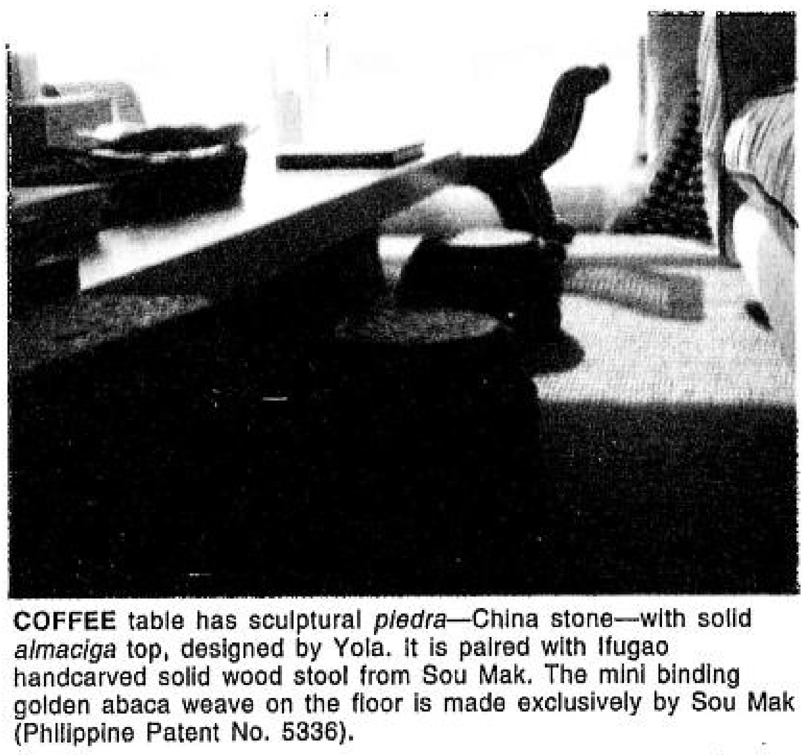
And perhaps this, to show that Yola is perhaps her own best critic: "Maybe I haven't found the art that I want to identify myself with. It's a constant search for yourself."



YOLA designed the *kamagong* bed, which was crafted by Osmundo. Abaca linen screens in misty gray were designed by Elisa Reyes and are exclusively distributed by Sou Mak.



THE LIVING area of the Roxas Triangle features a sculptural piece by Yola that combines *piedra* China rock with a solid piece of *almaciga*. Another binding abaca weave, made exclusively by Sou Mak, covers the floor.



COFFEE table has sculptural *piedra*—China stone—with solid *almaciga* top, designed by Yola. It is paired with Ifugao handcarved solid wood stool from Sou Mak. The mini binding golden abaca weave on the floor is made exclusively by Sou Mak (Philippine Patent No. 5336).

AAI's play moves to PICC on its final weekend

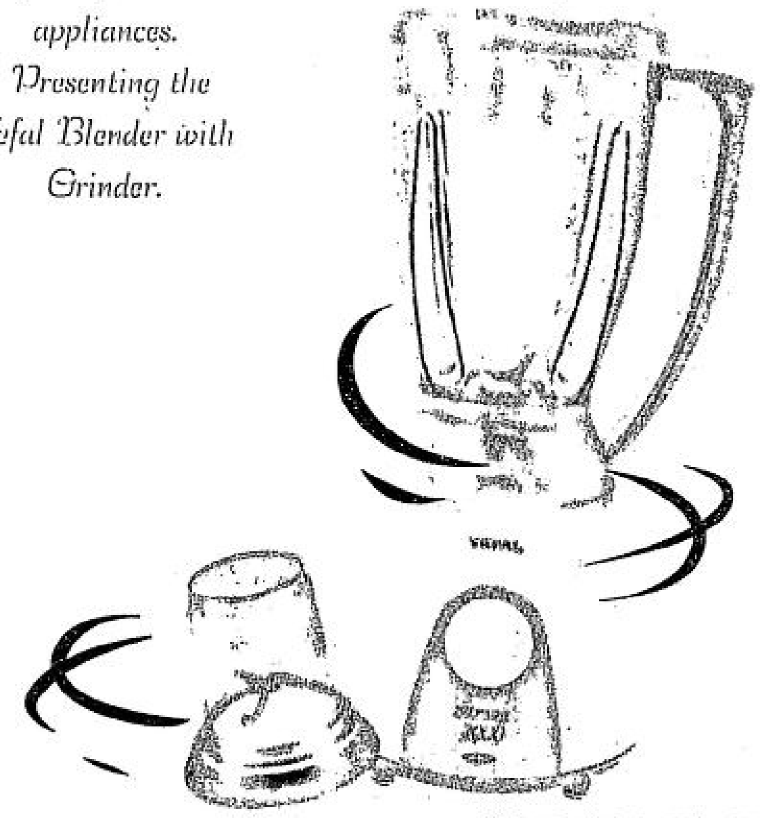
PATRICK Marber's controversial and highly acclaimed play, "Closer," will move to PICC Meeting Room 2 on its final weekend (today and tomorrow) due to the fire that destroyed its original venue, The Republic of Malate.

All paid tickets will be honored at the new venue and show times remain unchanged at 8 p.m.

Starring Aliw awardees Pinky Amador and Bart Guingona, together with Ana Abad-Santos and Lee Robin Salazar, "Closer" won numerous awards on both sides of the Atlantic at its original staging. AAI' s production marks its Philippine premiere.

Directed by Bart Guingona, "Closer" is an adult dark comedy about commitment and passion in a high-tech impersonal world

Tickets are available at National Bookstores, Ticketworld and at AAI at 536-5844.



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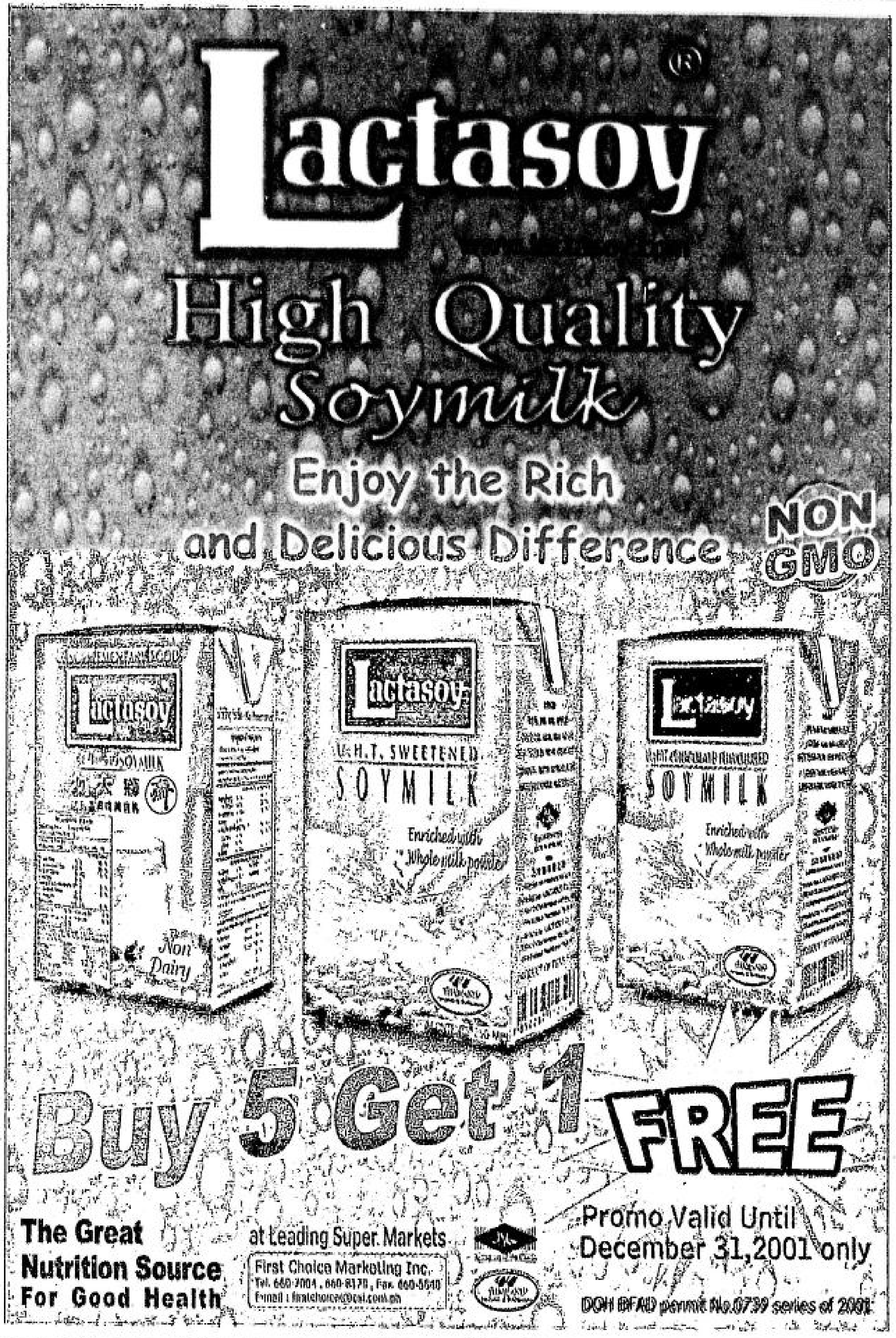

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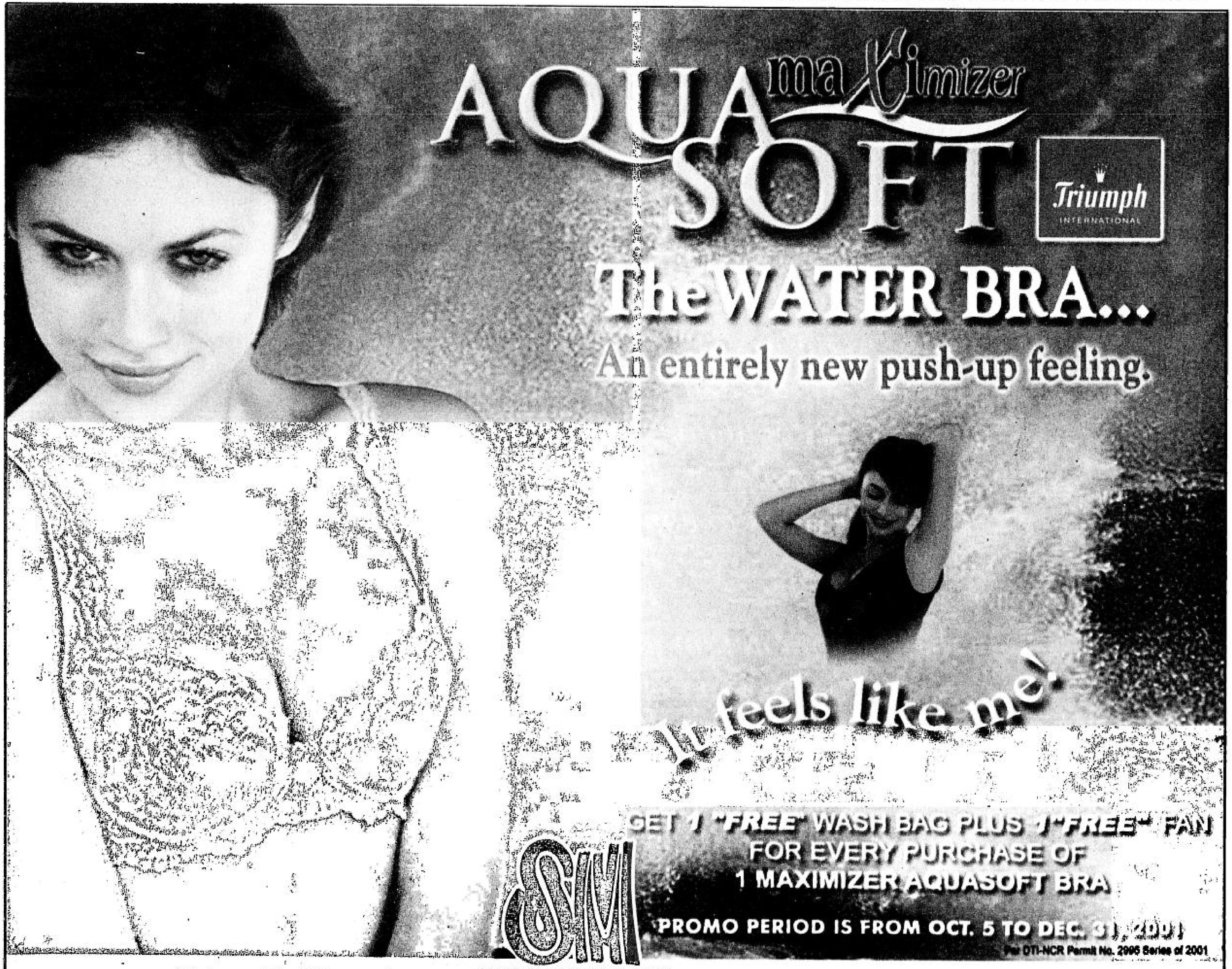

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Tiles to make you smile

APO Vinyl tiles offers the look of authentic marble and stone. The warm colors of the tiles can be used alone or in combination with the APO Platinum Line to create that ultimate "hard-hitting" floors.

PHOTOS BY BETOY JHONSON

BECAUSE the floor of a room is virtually the first thing one sees in a new house or building, it easily becomes a major concern of space planners who then seek the best and latest in flooring materials. They are likely to find it in premium quality homogenous vinyl tiles, known in the local market as APO Vinyl Quartz Tiles.

From the start, the acceptance rate of this special flooring product has been high, according to Puyat Vinyl Products Inc. (PVPI).

PVPI realized that the word "vinyl" connoted ordinary and cheap plastic. To counter this misconception, it came out with high-end types of flooring known as Platinum Selection and Platinum Designer Series. Daniel T. Dumaraos, VP assistant general manager, enumerates the advantages of APO's vinyl tiles: they are scratch-resistant, durable, easy to maintain, resistant to chemicals, stable in all dimensions, easy and inexpensive to install and replace, and beautiful.

Unique layer

The Platinum Selection's advantage is a feature called "wear-layer" which provides a protective film that acts as buffer against factors that may damage the look and construction of the tile.

THE CLASSIC beauty of natural stone and marble in these high performance vinyl tiles guarantees flooring satisfaction for residential and commercial use.

The film of the wear-layer also makes it possible to put in decorative details to make patterns of one's choice. The other layers provide durable backing and allow the vinyl to stay bonded to the floor.

Since the tiles approximate the look of real stone, marble, granite and wood, the opportunities to mix and match them are many. For this reason, people who would otherwise choose natural wood planks or ceramic tiles for their floors switch to vinyl and order customized patterns (geometric or floral) according to their own floor designs.

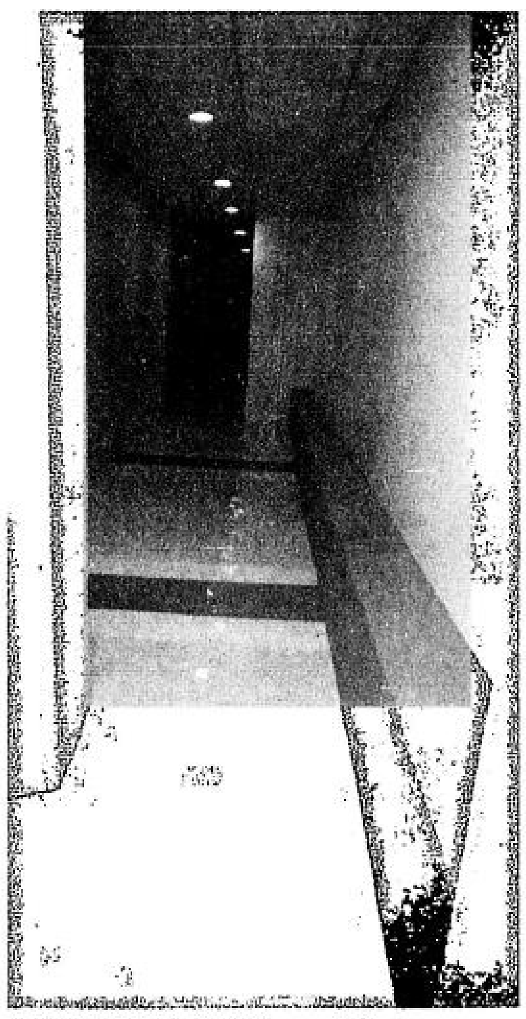
Mixing and matching, says sales and marketing director Alex L. Araneta, open up more creative dimensions to the use of vinyl tiles. By juxtaposing colors, sizes and shapes of tiles as one desires, special effects on floor patterns can be achieved.

Quality control

APO tiles are manufactured under rigid quality control, Dumaraos says, so that they meet international standards such as those of the American Society for Testing Materials, British Standards, Australian Standards and Japanese Institute of Standards.

To the homemaker, the best thing about the tiles is that they're easy to clean. All that's needed is a good mopping with a damp cloth. For a bigger and professional job, the company offers floor care products for specific purposes—like sealing, shining and buffing.

Concern for the environment is the mark of a good company, and PVPI manifests this in its use of vinyl instead of wood (no need to cut down trees), of nontoxic cleaning and bonding products (its bond adhesives are water-based) and of nonaddictive ingredients. *Doris Nuyda*



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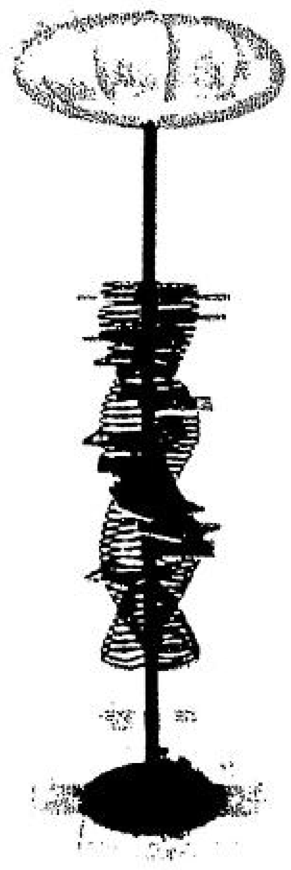
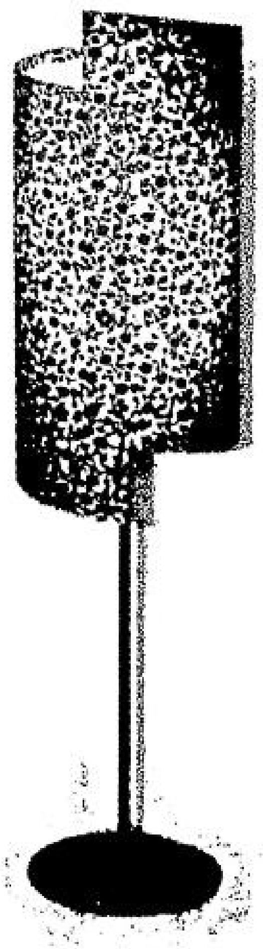
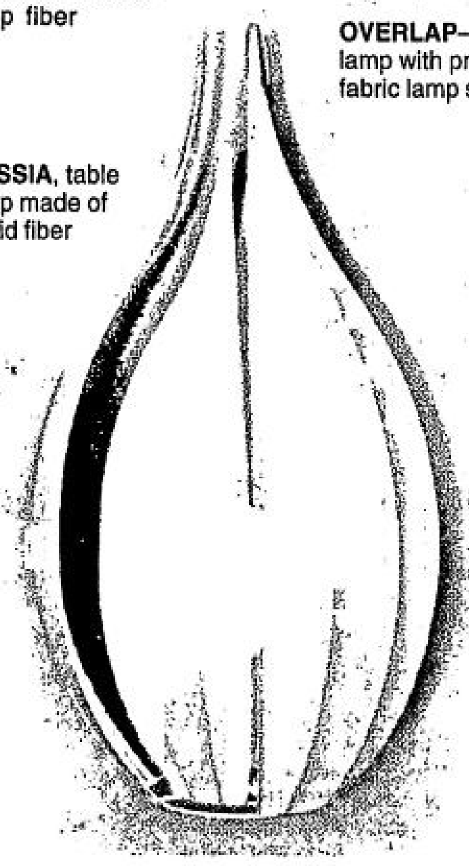


CD floor lamp can accomodate 104 CDs with bubble lamp fiber



OVERLAP—table lamp with printed fabric lamp shade

HANGING LAMP—Scotland, made from fiber



RUSSIA, table lamp made of liquid fiber

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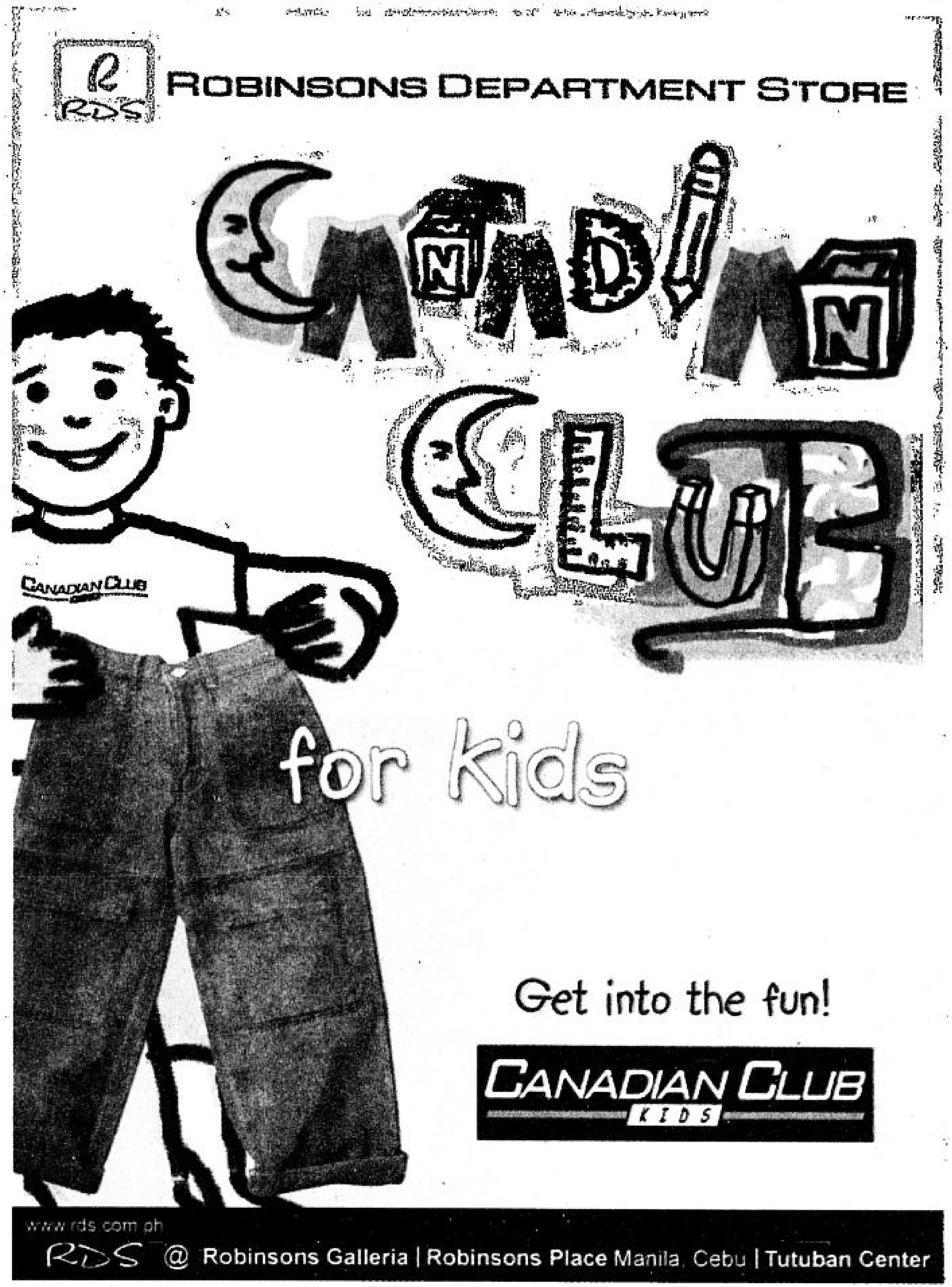

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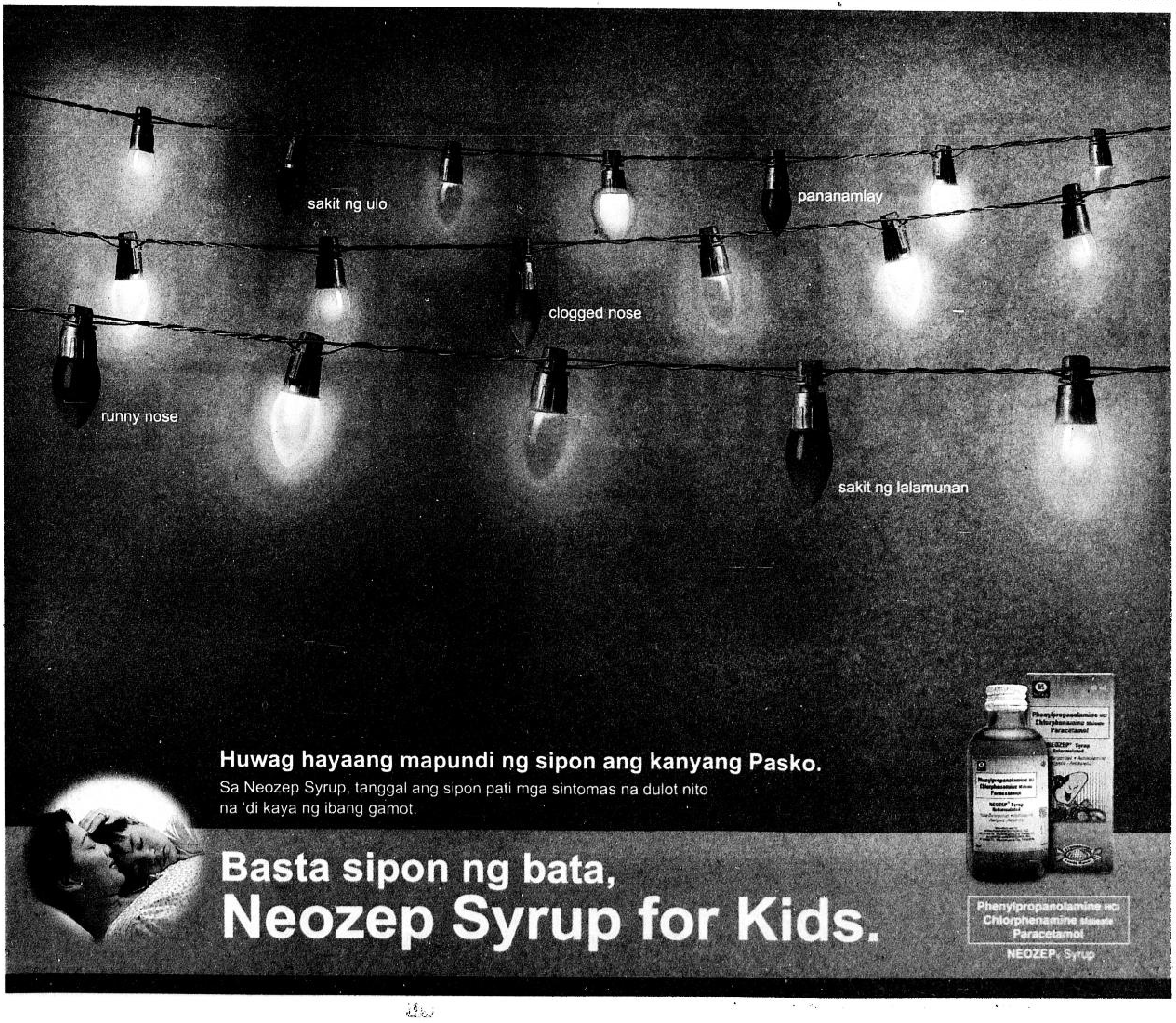

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TIVOLI lights cascade from a garden trellis.

Christmas décor, repletion style

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Bobot Meru

> According to baroque designer Tony Adriano, to whip up the proper Yuletide mood, the key word is indulgence, not scrooge-ing around in the guise of moderation

WHILE most of his colleagues are only now beginning to resurrect vestiges of '80s excess, interior designer and furniture maker Tony Adriano has been pushing everything to the limits for as long as he remembers. His penchant to go overboard is evident in the plethora of traditional and stylized Christmas décor that adorn his cozy weekend home and several public areas in posh Canyon Woods.

"The more the merrier," he declares, as green, red and gold trimmings compete with the tinsel of hundreds upon hundreds of tivoli lights. "There's no such thing as enough is enough as long as you mix and match pieces in the proper places." To Adriano, however, that means every available nook and cranny of the house.

Adriano's table setting, for instance, is bounteous with traditional Yuletide pieces such as artificial poinsettias, plums, pears, grapes and Christmas balls that are either gold-trimmed or crystallized for added sheen and texture. The central arrangement, complete with several antique wooden angel figurines, is anchored on three big, red candles of varying lengths.

THE MORE THE MERRIER. Adriano pays close attention to such details as throw pillows and door trimmings.

MIDAS TOUCH. Adriano's table setting brims with the warmth, textures and colors of the holidays. Wine-red napkins with gold pattern contrast with French-inspired plates edged in green and gold. Antique angels and gold-trimmed and crystallized décor are anchored on three red candles. Flatware, show plates and placemats are all in gold.

Wine-colored table napkins with gold pattern provide a perfect foil to the Louis XIV-inspired plates edged in green and gold. Adriano set gold-plated flatware and show plates on gold placemats. As if all that sheen weren't enough, several gold vines crawl from one part of the table to another. He then spruced up the streamlined chandelier with artificial pine and buntings in red and gold. The only minimalist objects in the dining area are probably the neo-classic chairs and two identical pedestals. Alas, each pedestal holds a spray of faux greens and red poinsettias dotted with shimmery balls.

"When it comes to Christmas decorations, don't be afraid to break rules," Tony says, as he shows us a new use for the Christmas wreath. "Be daring and

CHRISTMAS/ p.C11

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POWER PLANT MALL
AT ROCKWELL

Christmas décor, repletion style

TABLETOP figurines and Christmas balls arranged like fruits in season

INSPIRED floral arrangement bursting with the season's colors

CHRISTMAS of the hearts

HARLEQUIN dolls add to the holiday cheer.

(From page C10)

you'll be surprised with the results."

Indeed, an oversized Christmas wreath dangles from the living room ceiling instead of the door. Unhappy with the small commercial varieties found in the malls, Adriano deftly put together this exaggerated piece made from artificial pine. He then spruced it up with red and gold Christmas balls, arabesques, teardrop and stalactite-like drippings and, of course, the de rigueur tivoli lights.

"Don't scrimp on lights," he adds. "Even the most subdued indoor as well as outdoor arrangements come alive because of them."

Again, hundreds of lights compete for every available space among the melange of Yuletide emblems that border the mirror framed in *ukit-ukit* just above the fireplace—it's the real thing this time. Several of these elements have found their way to the slim but décor-laden Christmas tree. He chose such a lean silhouette so as not to crowd the already crowded living room, no thanks to several padded furniture pieces and a glass-topped coffee table with three round candles perched on corresponding candelabras and child figurines set on red, gold and *tawas*-like crystals.

Minimalism may have no place in Adriano's book, but his ingenuity and childlike determination at times border on the inspired. His floral arrangements succeed in capturing the color and opulence of the season, while his attempts at improvisation are often amazing. A glass-topped side table, for instance, instantly assumed a holiday feel through numerous strips of red ribbons that cover it. Hints of gold line every strip, which, in turn, complements the floral arrangement on top and the gold-painted deer figures underneath. He then dressed up—literally—a plain easy chair for the holidays by artfully wrapping it in gold taffeta.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, he says, it doesn't cost much to spruce up the home for the holidays. Most of Adriano's pieces, for example, were bought on Christmases past, for mixing and matching depending on the theme and his mood. He holds on to them, buying only a few necessary items every year, until each piece fades or falls apart with time.

"Christmas trimmings should reflect one's lifestyle and personality," he says. "Go ahead and follow what you feel and everything else will eventually fall into place." When in doubt, it doesn't hurt to go overboard if only once a year.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

A GLASS-TOPPED side table assumes a holiday feel through strips of red ribbons. Hints of gold line every strip, which, in turn, complements the floral arrangement on top and gold-painted deer figures underneath.

NO ROOM AT THE INN. Christmas baubles glisten in the Adriano living room. Even the framed mirror is accented with faux pine, poinsettias, Christmas balls and ubiquitous lights. The Christmas tree is decidedly narrow to fit into the already crowded living space. Child figurines accented with multicolored crystals rest on the glass-topped coffee table.

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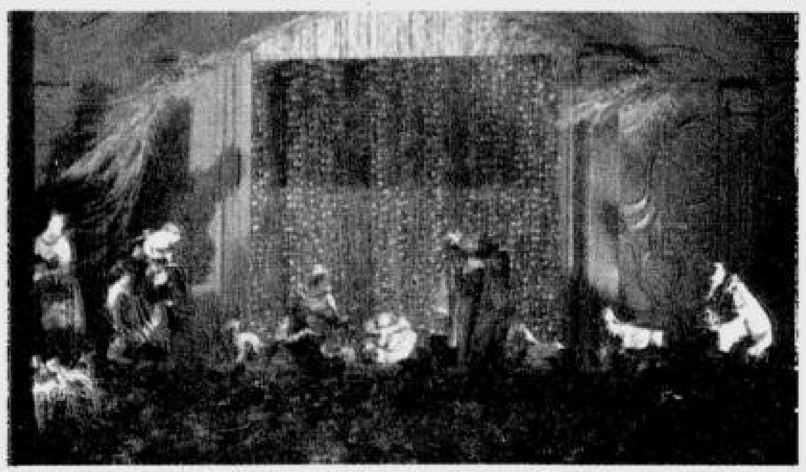


LIFELIKE Nativity figures set in a grass-and-bamboo stable before a curtain of tivoli lights

TONY Adriano has decked Canyon Woods with lights, tinsel and fake boughs of holly that impart certain public areas with a warm, homey feel. The setup has several focal points, depending on what part of the upscale residential resort by Taal Lake you're in.

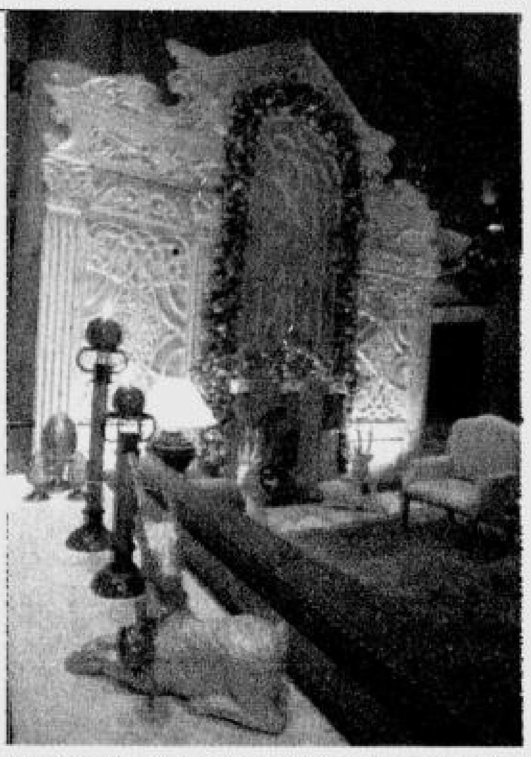
Tony Adriano dresses up Canyon Woods overlooking Taal Lake in the unabashed colors of Christmas

The faux fireplace made of styrofoam and painted in gold is decidedly the clubhouse's main attraction. Adriano maximized the venue's high ceiling by piecing together a 15-foot tall structure, carved and decked with artificial pine, poinsettias and numerous Christmas lights that follow a cathedral's arch and fireplace mantle.

"I've recreated a living room," he says, "where people stop, sit and pose for pictures." Never mind their larger-than-life proportions. The 15-foot tall Christmas tree ringed with glowing tivoli lights and studded with stars of Bethlehem and beribboned candelabras looms large. So are two sets of oversized balls and arabesque-shaped trimmings with spindles, one set in green and gold, the other in red and gold, which dangle from the high ceiling.

Homey colors

Forget silver, blue and lilac shades so popular during the run-up to the new millennium two years ago. "I wanted to achieve the look and feel of a real home," Adriano says, "that's why I had to balance it by limiting the colors to traditional ones such as green, red and gold."



ADRIANO recreates a larger-than-life living room with accent pieces in traditional green, silver and gold.

FAUX fireplace, carved and outlined with Christmas trimmings, for that homey ambiance

But why limit the tree's décor to stars and candleholders? "Christmas has become too commercialized," he explains. "Through this classic symbols, I want to remind people of the real reason for celebrating Christmas."

The interior designer, however, hasn't completely eschewed jolly old Santa Claus. Adriano has reinterpreted the beloved Western symbol by fashioning bodies from dried stalks and attaching them to a pair of wooden Santa heads sourced from a heap of old Christmas décor from the Canyon Woods warehouse. The result? A pair of slim Santa figures like no other.

He has done the same to a dozen or so deer figures that have seen better days. Thanks to a coat of grainy textured paint in gold, Santa's pets are again as good as new. Each reindeer has Christmas-inspired necklaces in red, green and, yes, gold. He has done the same thing to several rusty birdcages that were bound for the garbage truck.

"I'll just change the accents and dab a new coat of pastel-colored paint, and they'll be ready for summer," Adriano says, referring to the painted birdcages that now adorn the clubhouse's restaurant.

Points of interest

Other points of interest include identical wreaths that hang between the faux fireplace. On top of the de rigueur trimmings such as shiny balls, pinecones, holly berries and gold-trimmed poinsettias, Adriano has dressed up the wreaths with dangling red, gold and clear crystals. An accent table features a huge floral arrangement of artificial Yuletide blooms inspired by plants found only in temperate countries.

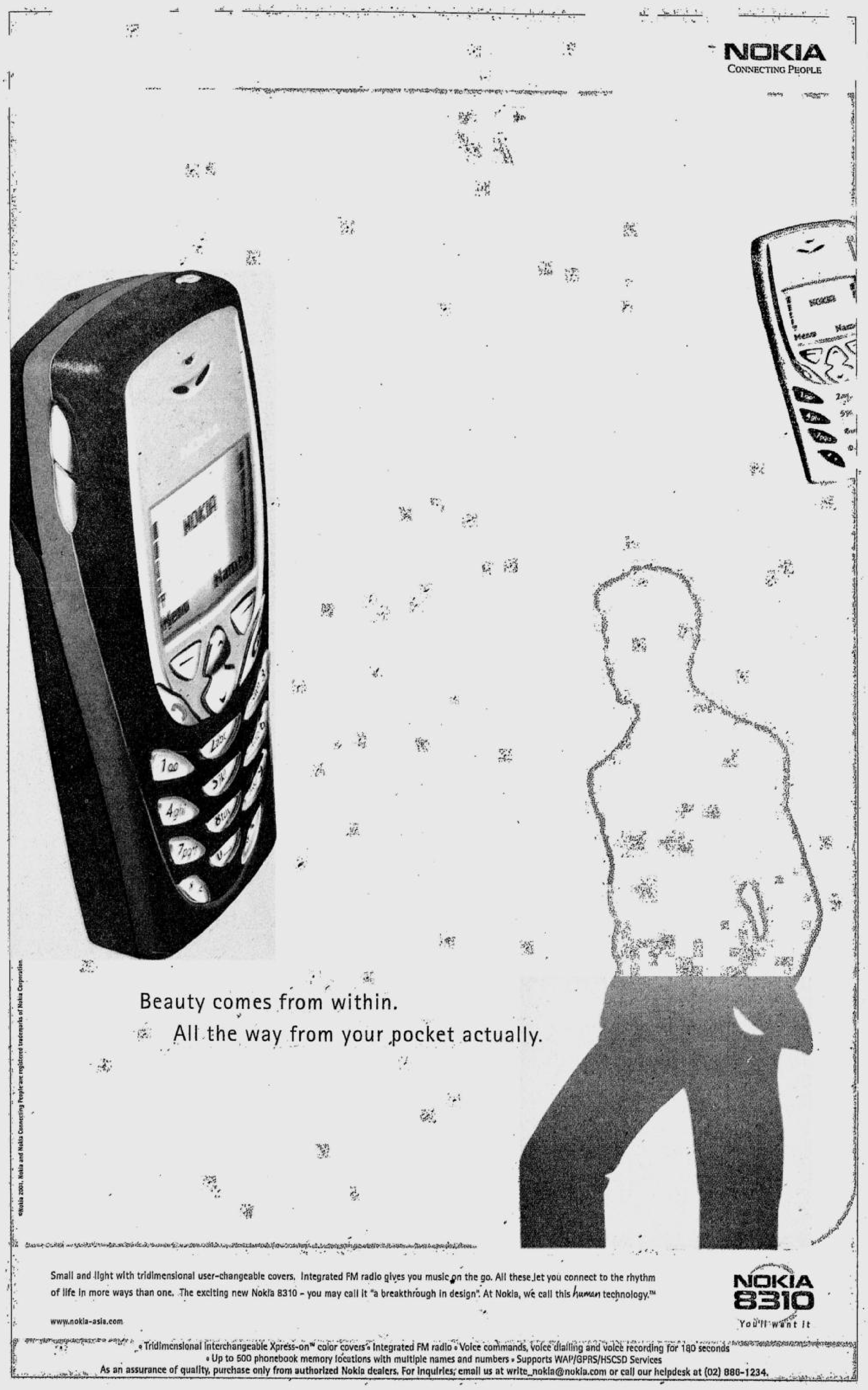
Then there's the outdoor *belen* by the clubhouse's circular driveway. For the first time in years, Adriano didn't set up the Nativity scene, which used to draw the attention of countless motorists in previous years, on the second floor of the family's building on Edsa. The lifelike figures have found a new home this year at Canyon Woods.

"The classic figures go well with the indigenous materials that make up the make-shift stable," he says. No fake poinsettias, pinecones and mistletoes here. Just real bamboo twigs and dried grass fit for the King of Kings.

Alex Y. Vergara

Call Tony Adriano at 882-0231 to -23

SANTA Claus just got slimmer and more stylized as seen in this pair fashioned from an unlikely combination of materials and influences. A birdcage that has seen better days is painted and spruced up for the holidays.



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FRANCK Provost's celebrity stylist Angelo Justin does magic on Cathy Guballa.

The staff of Life

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Chito Vecina
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA
DIGITAL COMPOSITION BY MARLONE RUBIO

HOW would you like to do some good karma?

That was a question we proposed to Sheree Gotuaco of Elite Garments, the manufacturer of 22 B.C., Ensembles and Freeway clothes.

The noble mission wasn't just dressing up the Lifestyle staff for a Christmas makeover. The aim was to debunk the elitist myth about style and beauty. The media have limited our concept of pulchritude to social position, perfect hybrid features, youth and thinness.

The aim of the makeover was to show that beauty stemmed from the willingness to be open to new ideas. Style and beauty started from pushing one's self to get out of one's boxed self-image or comfort zone. Most important, we wanted to show that style was not beholden to income bracket, age, skin tone and vital statistics.

Other friends of Lifestyle, such as Rustan's menswear designer Marden Iglesias, Janylin shoes and the Franck Provost team, were more than willing to cooperate in this advocacy.

Gotuaco and her team were chal-

THE STAFF/ p.D2

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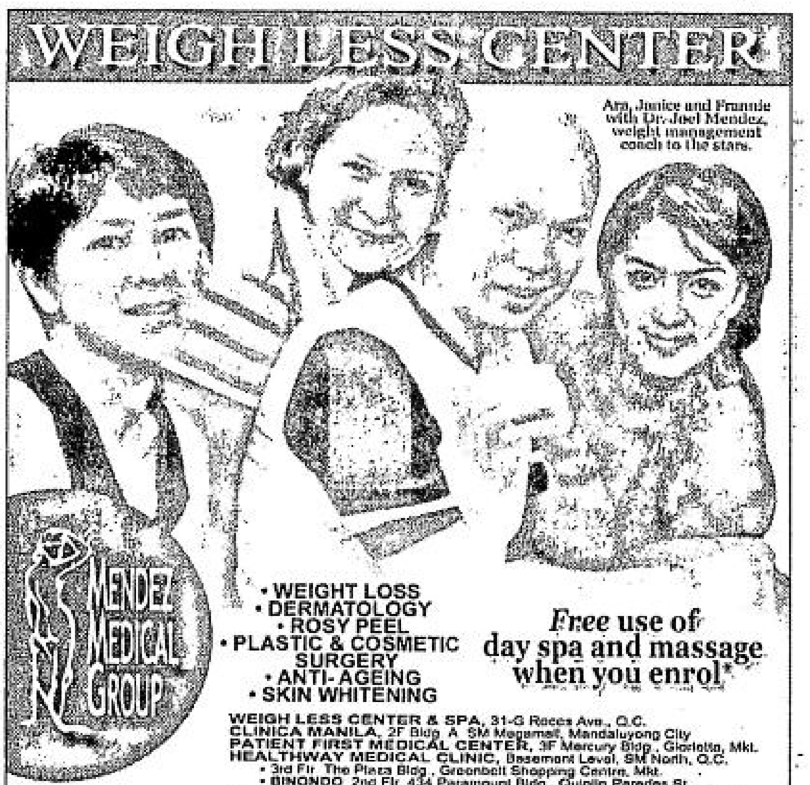
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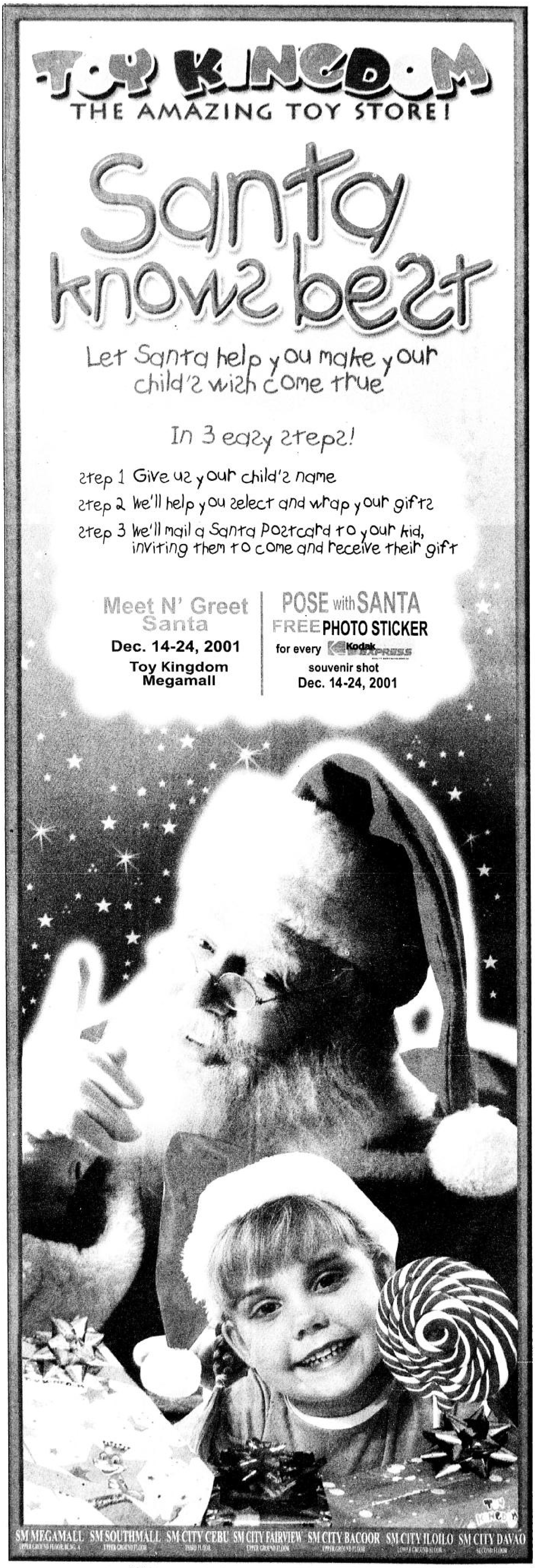

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SM CITY DAVAO Second Floor

TINA Santos

GEMMA Villapando

THESS Loayon

The staff of Life

(From page D1)

lenged since the Lifestyle staffers came in all shapes and sizes. Some of them didn't even socialize. Their lives revolved around the INQUIRER and the home. All of them were makeup shy. Their uniform attire was casual slacks and printed tops. Nonetheless, everyone from the senior reporters to the typesetters cooperated.

Gotuaco's team took photographs of the staffers and grouped them according to their sizes and personalities. Elite Garments' clothing lines had different sizing structures and different lifestyles.

Reporter Vangie Baga-Reyes was in the lone category of maternity wear. She was dressed up by Havin' A Baby in Glorietta.

Sophisticated

Editorial assistant Tina Santos and production specialists Gemma Villapando and Thess Loayon were classified as feminine and reserved. They wore evening gowns by 22 B.C. that exposed their shoulders and arms. Since all of them were modest, their shoulders were draped in sheer shawls, which doubled as their security blankets. This line catered to the mature and sophisticated market and to bigger sizes.

Tina wore a corset and a balloon skirt in silver with bluish gray undertones to flatter her fair complexion, plus silver, gem-encrusted strappy sandals with 2-inch heels.

Hair and makeup stylist Socky Esposito found Tina's hair to be coarse and shapeless that it tended to drag her features. Tina was given a layered cut for a softer look. For her makeup, the stylist emphasized her well-shaped nose. Her face was brightened by red-orange lipstick.

To reveal some subtle sensuality, Gemma wore a spaghetti-strapped gown with a slit in this season's color, purple, and silver, open-toed slingbacks. Paulino Calverio added body to her limp hair by giving her a feathery look that didn't need blow-drying. He used the classic makeup of brown eyes and red lipstick.

Thess was dressed in a burgundy two-piece gown with a deep V to show off her fair neck, with beaded footwear in the same color. Stylist Alex Bourbon gave her dull hair some bounce by layering it and styling her natural curls. For her eyes, he used nutmeg as a base and contoured it with purple, blue, dark brown and highlighted it with copper. Brick lipstick balanced the look.

ROWENA Burgos

Tailored

Since editorial assistant Anne Jambora and production specialists Gigi Osorio and Belen Belesario were far from the frou-frou types, they were classified under the Ensembles line, which specializes in basic separates. Since they didn't wear makeup, the stylists made them feel comfortable in colors close to their skin tones.

Anne wore a monochromatic dark blue outfit to make her look taller and slimmer. A denim jacket with darts on the front and the back gave the illusion of removing inches from her torso. A skirt with two slits on the side lent a touch of femininity to the tomboyish Anne. To update her look, she was shod in pointed midcalf boots with 2-inch heels.

Stylist Paul Cuevas trimmed her hair for more body. He shaved her bushy brows to lighten up her face. Subdued earth tones in brown and orange softened her sharp features.

Although Gigi likes to wear men's clothes (in fashionista lingo, butch chic), she's got a soft heart. Gigi looked like an executive in a dark gray military pantsuit worn with a striped collared shirt, complemented with black slip-on shoes.

Stylist Alex Bourbon gave her a sassy haircut. He used earth tones for the natural look.

Belen wore an olive suit, accented with a turtleneck top, studded camel belt and ankle-high boots, all in camel. Paulino Calverio straightened Belen's wavy hair by using a hair dryer for a neat look. He used tans and browns to suit her dusky skin.

Fun

Unlike Ensembles and 22 B.C. which complemented the laid-back personalities of the Lifestyle's production team, the Freeway line augured well for the staffers who did more field work.

Senior reporter Rowena Burgos got out of her regular attire of a button-down shirt and jeans and slipped into something sexy—a fully sequined halter top, teamed with an A-line skirt in denim and faux leather, accented with studs. Completing the look was a pair of bronze slingbacks. Weng felt conscious about the deep V, but if her husband saw her, he'd certainly approve.

Victor Manuel gave her hair more body by using styling mud. He dramatized her eyes with black eyeliner and balanced the look with subtle rose cheek color for a healthy glow and a lipgloss to enhance her naturally rosy lips.

Reporter Cathy Guballa wore a striped overlap blouse with a red tube and black pants.

Angelo Justin gave her a pixie haircut. He used soft colors to accentuate her delicate cheekbones. His makeup concept was to give her natural sheen.

Editorial assistant Belle Bondoc didn't need an extensive makeover since her amiable personality was enough to carry her. She slipped into a black top with a faux fur trim and a knee-length, stretch lace skirt and strappy sandals. Cuevas merely added more body to her medium-length hair and applied cool colors on her dusky complexion.

Cheche Moral was the easiest to dress up, according to Gotuaco's team. She wore a sexy metal mesh backless top with a Union Jack pattern and sexy stretch denim pants. This ultra-feminine editorial assistant isn't the type who'd pump iron or jog for miles. Like her colleagues, she munches a lot and even sneaks out for coffee breaks at Starbucks, yet she manages to maintain a tiny figure that she could get away with this outfit. Trendy red sandals complemented the look.

Bourbon feathered her soft hair and gave her more color. For her eyes, he used sage and green as the base, topped with pearlized violet and gold for accent.

Vangie was self-conscious about her tummy. To de-emphasize her bulge, she wore a beaded twinset with black stretch pants. The warm rust color reflected her warm Leo personality. Ryan Dignadice and Esposito trimmed her locks for a neater look and chose pink colors to show the mother in full bloom.

Menswear

In the men's department, Iglesias did his research on senior reporters Alex Vergara and Constantino Tejero. After reading Alex's travelogues, Iglesias concluded that the reporter was more cosmopolitan in outlook. He looked taller and trendy in a monochromatic black attire—MR turtleneck shirt and stretch jeans, topped with an Oleg Cassini jacket and Italian Luce shoes.

"I see him as open to fashion ideas," observed Iglesias. After all, Alex is also known for his controversial critiques of movie star dressing on awards nights.

Iglesias didn't deviate too much from the conservatism of Tino, whose byline frequently appears in the culture pages. For unchanging types like Tejero, Iglesias picked stretch cotton shirt and twill chinos with an Oleg Cassini three-button jacket with matching OC shoes. However, Iglesias updated the look by choosing a classic yet sharp combination of olive, black and khaki.

THE STAFF/ p.D5

Showcase of gorgeous lingerie

INNOVATIVE Events & Concepts Co. Inc., with Wacoal, Mendez Medical Group, Casino Filipino and David's Salon, will hold "Stringly Gorgeous," a lingerie fashion show for women. Wacoal unveils its latest collection of intimate apparel, the Wacoal seamless bra line. The show will be held at the Casino Filipino-Parañaque, PIRC Building, Naia Road, Paranaque City on Dec. 15, 8 p.m. Call 890-0153, 757-2866 or (0917) 274-1381.

GOINGS-ON

CONCERT. The St. James the Great Renewal Praise Ministry will hold a praise and worship concert dubbed "Shine Through," on Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at the Sylvia P. Lina Theater De La Salle Zobel, Ayala Alabang. Proceeds from the concert will go to the San Lorenzo Ruiz Quasi Parish, San Manuel, Bulacan and the construction of the St. James the Great Retreat Center in Batangas. Call 807-6001.

XMAS PRESENTATION. Victoria School Foundation will sponsor a Christmas presentation dubbed "Pasko," at Riverbanks, Marikina City on Dec. 18, 6 p.m. Call 727-6758/7877/6831, 413-1179 or 941-4446.

SEMINAR. Jaime Licauco, president of In

SHOWCASE/ p.D4

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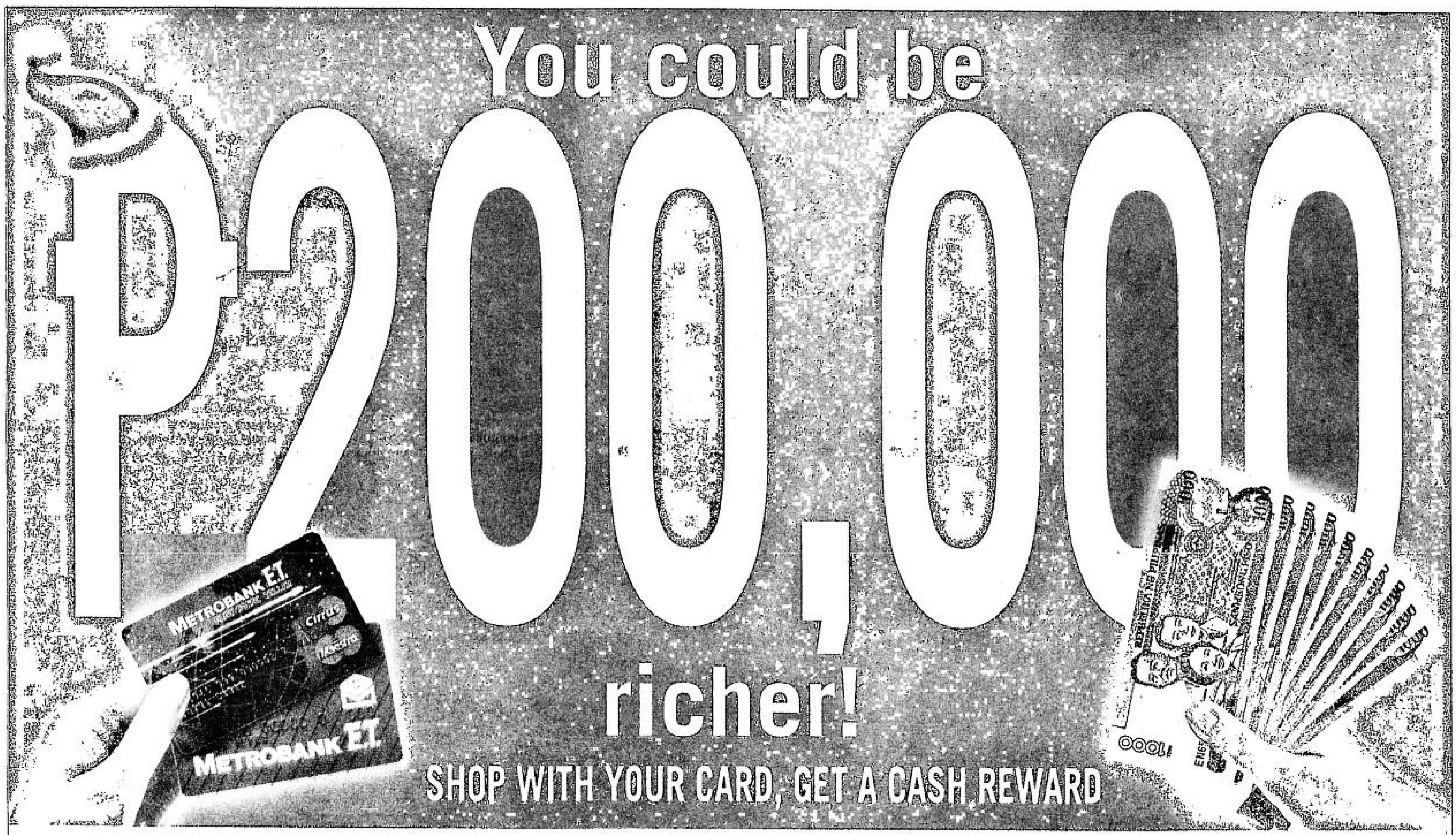
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Showcase of gorgeous lingerie

(From page D3)

ner Mind Development Institute, will conduct a seminar on "Soul Mates, Karma and Reincarnation," on Dec. 15, 1-7 p.m. Call 892-6806 or 810-7245.

REUNION. Class 1958 of Rizal High School will hold its 43rd reunion on Dec. 16, at Marigold in Buting, Pasig City. The reunion team is headed by Florante Cruz, Estrellita Yson-Evangelista Sr. Rose Geronimo, Cayetano and Julieta Landrito-Lorenzo, Bonifacio Reyes, Praxedes San Miguel-De la Rosa, Virgilio del Rosario, Consuelo Canlas-Callang, Archangel Cruz-Mina, Nieva Franco-Cagay, Francis Rillo and Herminia Reyes Asuncion. Call Juliet Landrito-Lorenzo at 631-1150, Praxedes San Miguel-Dela Rosa at 655-3958, Consuelo Canlas-Callang at 873-1317 or Bonifacio Reyes at 641-1440.

CONTEST. The Quiz Bee Foundation presents the "Summit of the Super Quiz Bee," on Dec. 14-16, at the Development Academy of the Philippines Hostel and Conference Center, Tagaytay City. The highlight is the "22nd National Super Quiz Bee" grand finals at the DAP auditorium Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Admission is free.

STORYTELLING SESSION. Big & Small Co. and Sacred Heart School, with Shangri-La Plaza and Hearts and Bells Cake Artistry, invites kids aged 2-12 to a special Christmas event dubbed "Once Upon a Royal Birth" Dec. 15 and 22, 10 a.m.-12 nn, at the Grand Atrium of Shangri-La Plaza mall. The event will feature a storytelling session by Alitaptap Storytellers Club and an on-the-spot coloring contest. Interested participants should pre-register at the Big & Small Co. at 4/L Shangri-La Plaza. Call 813-7928 or 894-4172.

BAZAAR. Visit the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel Holiday Gifts Bazaar on Dec. 15, 16, 22 and 23 at the Lower Lobby, Boracay and Lubang. Shoppers can get one-of-a-kind products from all over the world, plus the best of Philippines crafts at manufacturers' prices. Call 820-7879/1570.

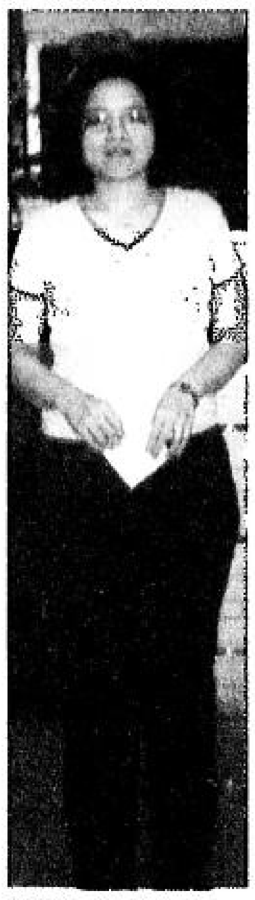
XMAS ACTIVITY. Starting Dec. 16, 5 a.m., *simbang gabi* will be held at the Al Fresco Lobby of the Greenhills Theater Mall to be officiated by Fr. Nico Bautista. The Greenhills Theater Mall is located at the Greenhills Shopping Center.

Ateneo holds bazaar

THE ATENEO Graduate School of Business is holding its Christmas Bazaar at Ateneo, Rockwell on Dec. 14. Gift items are offered at low prices.

Meanwhile, the Student Council of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business will hold its Christmas party, at Ateneo, Rockwell on Dec. 15, 8 p.m. Featuring Time and Half Bands, the event will benefit a Scholarship Foundation of AGSB- Student Council,

BELEN Belesario



ANNE Jambora

GIGI Osorio

The staff of Life

(From page D2)

In sum, the makeover showed the staffers it is possible to rise above the ordinary. By the way, the staffers got to keep the clothes provided by Elite Garments. Lucky souls!

Labor of love

Our reliable friend Albert Avellana has got a keen eye in photography composition and made everybody feel at ease in front of Chito Vecina's camera. In the past two years Chito has been using digital camera in the home, garden and fashion shoots. Unlike other photographers who make noise about the use of digital cameras for their lifestyle pages, Chito has been very modest. (Even our pictorials with Patrick Uy were taken with a digicam). The advantage is that the images can be instantly previewed and corrections can be made easily.

It's a misconception that the pictorial director dictates the shots and the photographer merely presses the button and doesn't use his brain. Behind each image is a collaboration between two minds. Avellana, being a Gemini, an air sign, suggests the ideas. Vecino, being a Taurus, the earth sign for work, executes the concepts.

Every fashion pictorial undergoes a long process. Preproduction meetings are held to discuss concepts and logistics. From experience, lack of planning usually leads to disastrous results. So photographers make ocular inspections of proposed locations to check the lighting conditions and select sights. Letters requesting permission to shoot in certain locations and to pull out merchandise from the stores are sent out.

Designers and accessory designers go out of their way to prepare a collection for the INQUIRER. Retailers send samples of their new stock so that when the pictorial comes out, the clothes are in the stores. Makeup artists are booked.

> Their lives revolved around the INQUIRER and the home

Value added

In the postproduction process, INQUIRER's art department enhances the colors, particularly the skin tones, and removes dust particles that gather when the photos are being scanned. The aim is to produce clearer images and colors that remain true to their tones.

We admit that the images may not always be razor-sharp because of the printing or the quality of the films, but our aim is to produce the best possible standard.

Marlone Rubio does the layout. Art director Lynett Villariba supervises. For this makeover shoot, we decided to have fun with digital composition. All the fashion photographs were shot in the INQUIRER. The backgrounds, also taken by Vecina, came from previous home and garden pictorials.

Indeed every fashion pictorial, whether we're using the hot models of the moment such as Sarah Meier and Paul Aquino, celebrities like Lucy Gomez or real people like the Lifestyle staff, is a labor of love. Anything done with passion and diligence adds value to the product.

THE STAFF/ p.D6

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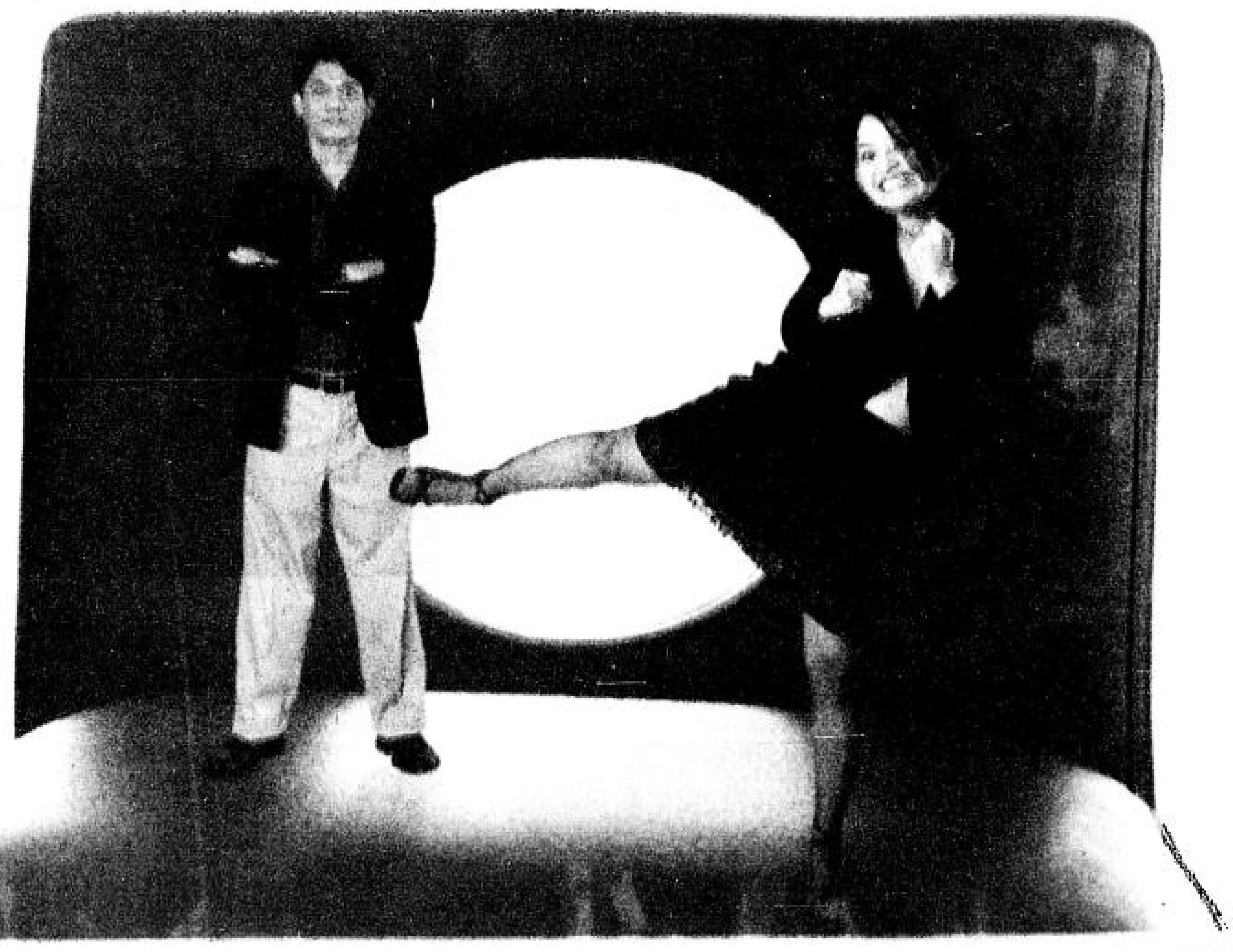
SASSY. Rowena Burgos, Cathy Babao Guballa and Cheche Moral bare their arms and wear fitted silhouettes. They all sport a pixie haircut. Weng and Cheche wear stronger makeup colors, while Cathy sports the barely-there makeup.

The staff of Life

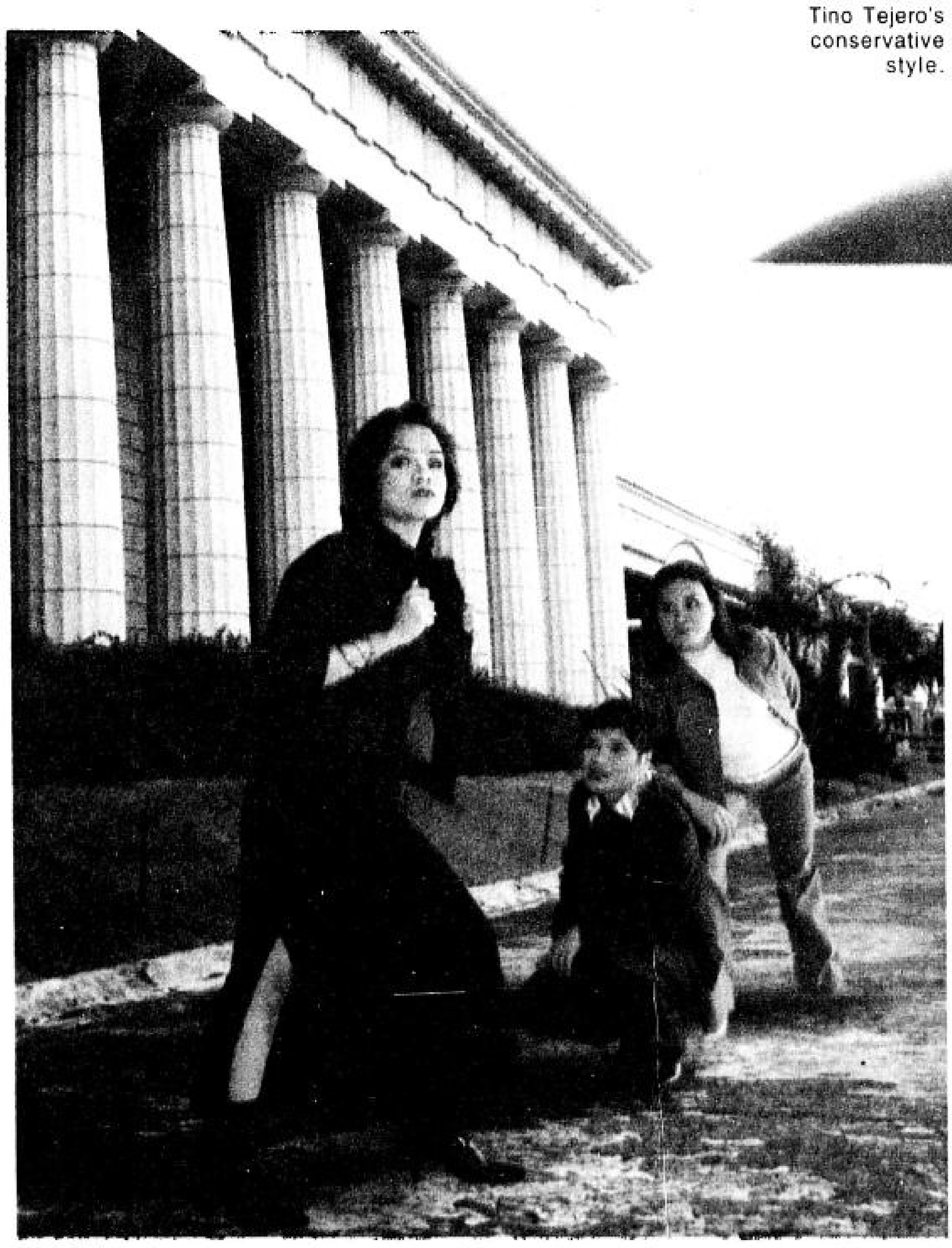
(From page D5)

The noble mission isn't just
to dress up the crew for a Christmas
makeover, but also
to show that beauty stems from
the willingness to be open to new ideas

THE STAFF/ p.D7



CLASSIC WITH A TWIST. Belle Bondoc kicks ass in an all-black outfit. The look is updated with romantic frills. The combination of earth tones and black enliven Tino Tejero's conservative style.



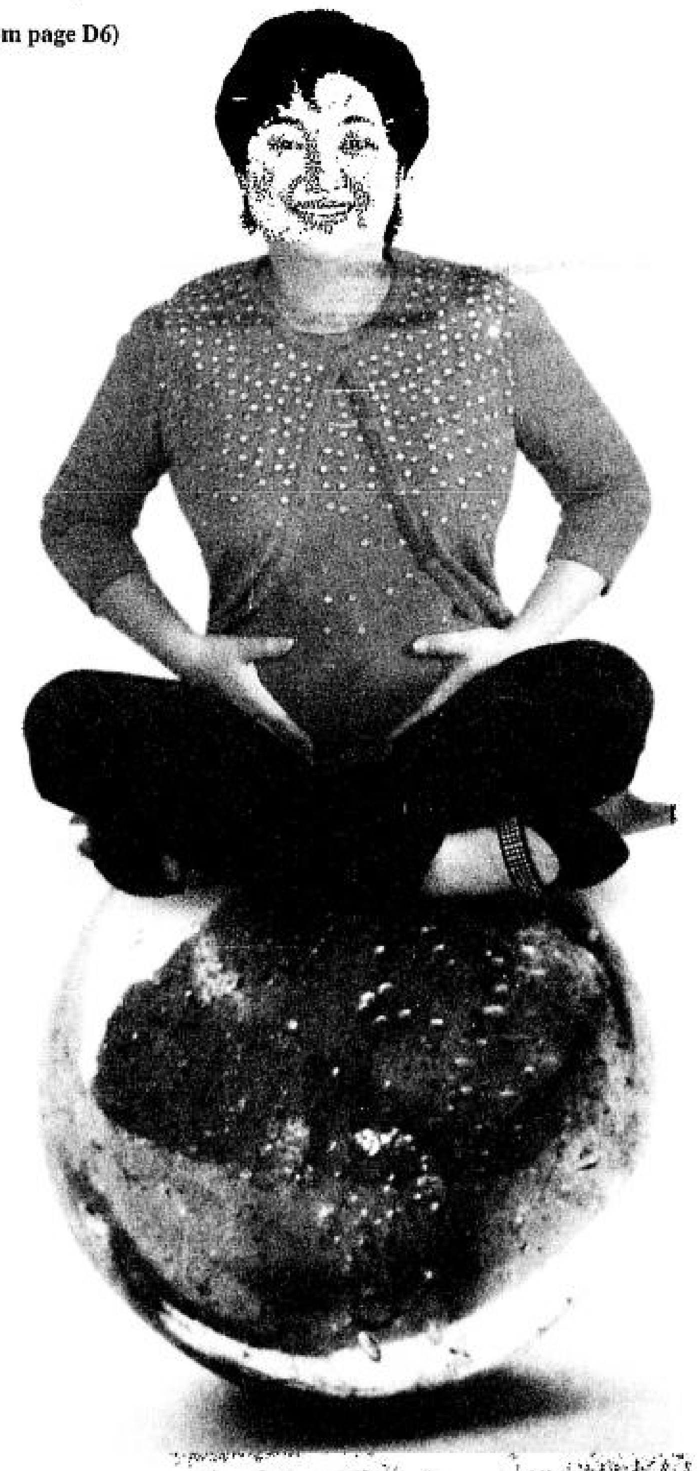
TAILORED. Anne Jambora, Gigi Osorio and Belen Belesario in mannish colors. The wash-and-wear hairstyles and earth-toned makeup palettes augur well with the look.

SOPHISTICATED. Tina Santos, Thess Loayon and a reclining Gemma Villapando wear evening gowns in holiday colors. Their hairstyles are soft and wavy. The makeup colors are classic.

JET-SETTER. Alex Vergara, the most widely traveled staffer, could fit in Manhattan, Paris or London in this sleek, all-black outfit.

The staff of Life

(From page D6)



BLOOMING. Vangie Baga-Reyes comes alive in a contrast of a warm color and solid black. The makeup shows her in the glow of health.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY FRANCK PROVOST SALON, BEL-AIR, MAKATI CITY
CLOTHES BY 22 B.C., ENSEMBLES, FREEWAY
VANGIE BAGA-REYES' CLOTHES: HAVIN' A BABY
SHOES: JANYLIN
MENSWEAR: MR, OLEG CASSINI FOR RUSTAN'S
MEN'S SHOES: LUCE, OLEG CASSINI

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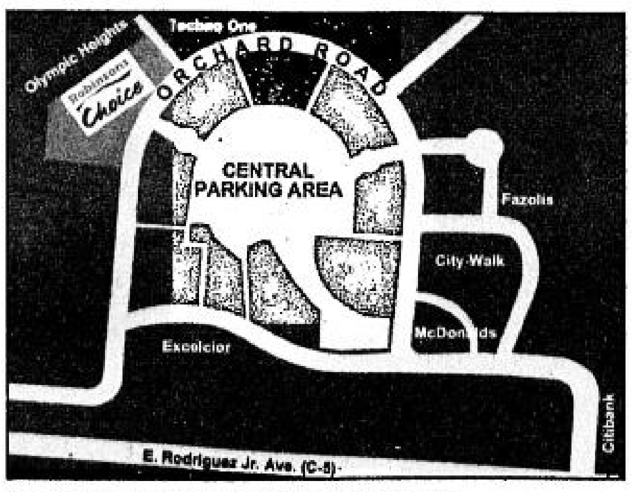
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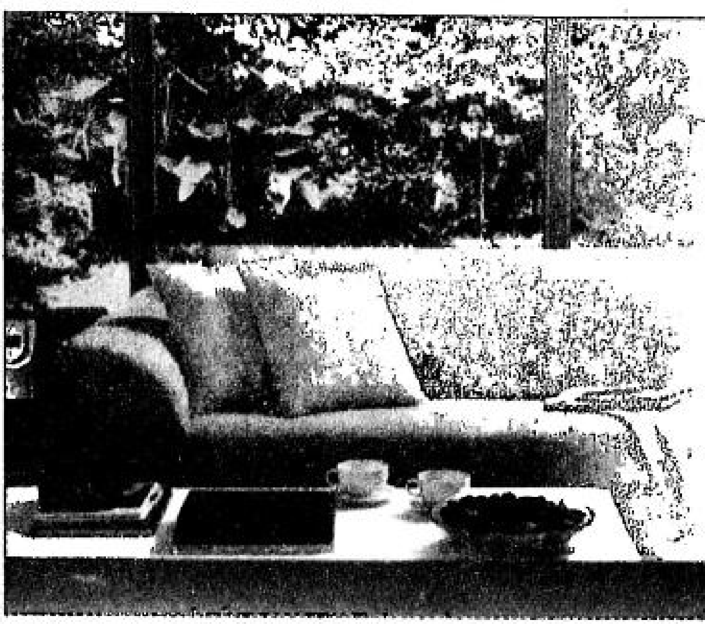

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Supermodel for a day

By Cheche V. Moral

WHAT girl wouldn't want to be dressed up, and dolled up and primped for a day—by an upscale French salon no less? But be photographed for the INQUIRER readership—and my deranged friends as well? I thought I had better take a rain check. I'd never hear the end of it.

The proposal for a fashion makeover was met by the Lifestyle staff with much tittering and the customary jeers usually accorded to something, well, outrageous. The banters, generally mock derisive, among the staff belied any qualms about the idea, which only proved my theory that there is a supermodel-wannabe lurking in everyone's subconscious. (See? I hear no protests.) Great, I thought, it should be fun to see us make complete fools of ourselves. We'll certainly make a day of it.

I arrived at Franck Provost on Jupiter a good 20 minutes before the 9 a.m. schedule. For us who work till after midnight that's a rather unholy hour, but I had to get there on time for sheer dread of that's-what-you-get-for-acting-like-a-diva hair-and-makeup from an irate hairstylist. My fears were, of course, unfounded; those guys were very professional. (The first batch of makeovers was, uh, late for the appointment, but nobody came out of the salon looking like she bore the wrath of anyone.)

This is the easy part, I thought, as the stylist, Alex, started blow-drying my just-washed hair. He asked Dara, the girl from 22 B.C., Freeway and Ensembles boutiques, what I would be wearing for the shoot. Alex grinned mischievously when told I'd be in a Union Jack metal mesh clubwear. Party animal, huh, he teased. I could only let out a chuckle. Are you kidding? I was tempted to blurt out. Working my shift for five years I don't even remember what the word "party" means.

Disheveled look

Then Alex started snipping at my already short locks. I cringed and bit my lip, but was reassured when he told me how to wear my hair after the shoot. He laid out a huge palette of colors in front of me and started applying foundation. Then he began working on my eyes, very painstakingly. That's the smoky look, he explained after what seemed like hours. Did I hear raccoon? My eyes looked even bigger than they already were! There was more makeup on them than paint used by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel! But I was so into what was going on to even muster a protest. Heck, I was having a ball!

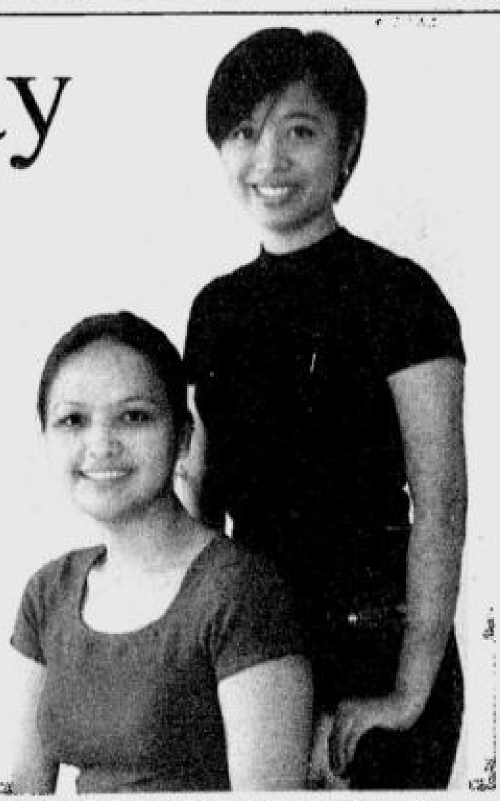
After he was done with my face, Alex's attention shifted back to my hair. He applied some really sticky goo and started literally pulling at my hair. Turned out he was aiming for a disheveled look. And got it he did—with a little help from my colleagues who each had her turn yanking at my scalp! I was ready to party—if only there were a party to go to.

And a party certainly the pictorial wasn't. Just when I thought the worse was over, we had to get dressed for the shoot. This time around our "involvement" as models was required. We had to play parts as instructed by the pictorial director and the photographer. And this was doubly hard to do as we had to endure the retaliatory teasing of the first batch whom we had tormented during their own pictorial a week earlier—and knowing these people, I should have known better than to take part in taunting them. More audacious (read: *kapal*) than the next person, I don't normally get self-conscious about what I'm wearing. But they had a field day over my bare back anyway. My lame retort was that I was posing for INQUIRER's newly acquired tabloids (which explains why no sordid photos appear on this spread, thank you).

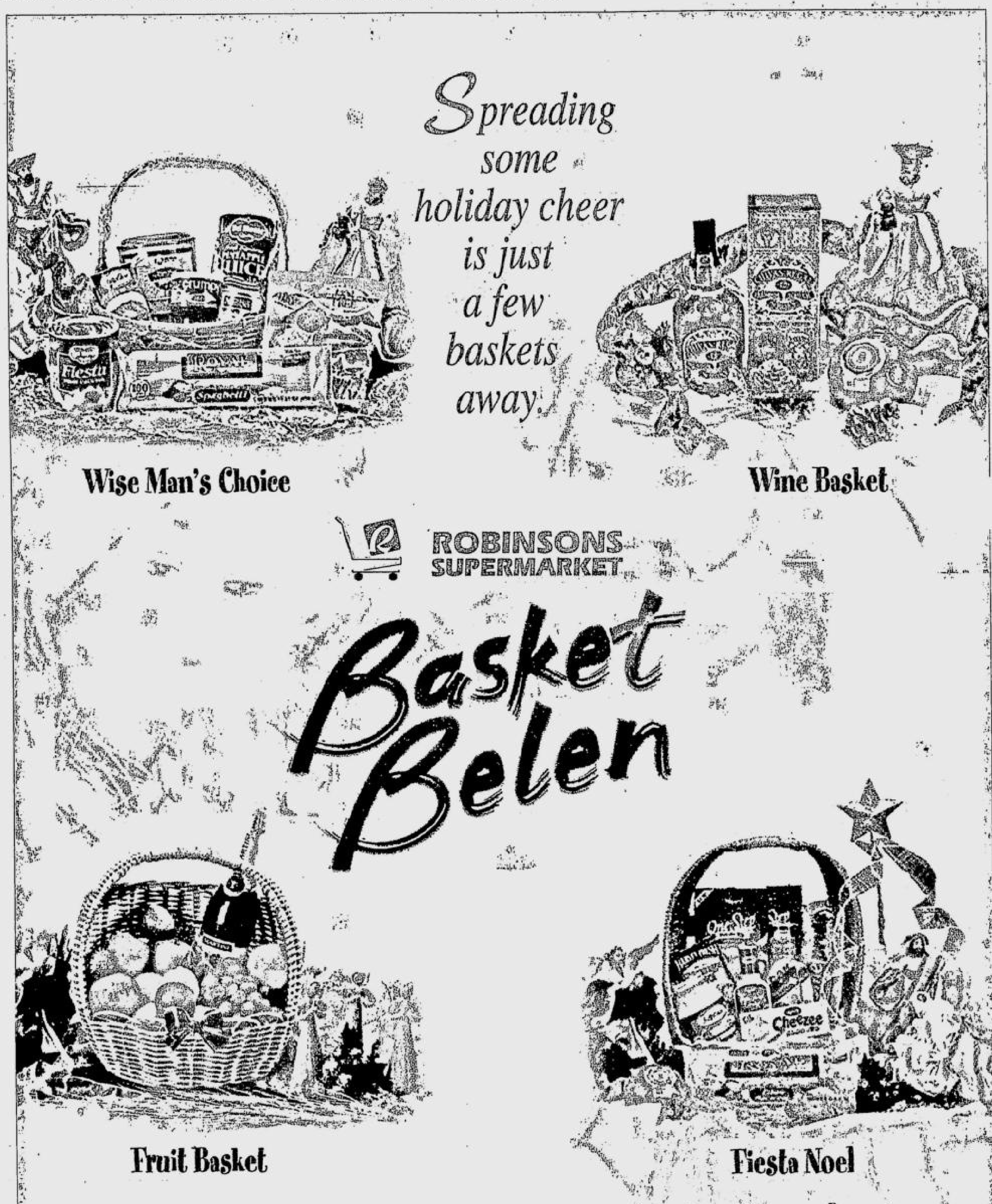
If I thought that would quiet them down, I must have been dreaming. When my turn to face the camera was called I suddenly felt so shy I wanted to disappear. Albert, the pictorial director, asked me to sit on a stack of Monobloc chairs, high enough to make my legs look like they were suspended on air. He asked me to raise my arms and smile. This is it, I thought nervously, and let out a giggle, half-covering my face with my hands. That's it! Albert exclaimed. But no, Chito, our photographer, didn't capture it on film! I groaned inwardly. Now I have to ham it up, and I'm no actor, I wanted to complain. Do it again, coaxed Albert patiently. Ironically, the teasing helped as I started laughing uncontrollably I didn't have to fake it.

It was no party but fun, after all. But, whew, was I glad when it was over.

The Lifestyle writers will agree it is one thing to write about models and altogether a different thing to step into a model's shoes. Fun as the pictorial has been, after living the fantasy, the supermodel-wannabe in me wants to stay put where it belongs: in the deepest recesses of my subconscious. As for my friends, I had hoped that today was the one day you'll be reading some other paper. But then again, eat your hearts out. Don't text or call; save the gibes till I see you next week.


REAL PEOPLE. The author (right) with Belle Bondoc

New hair, more makeup than usual, metal clubwear—it was fun while it lasted



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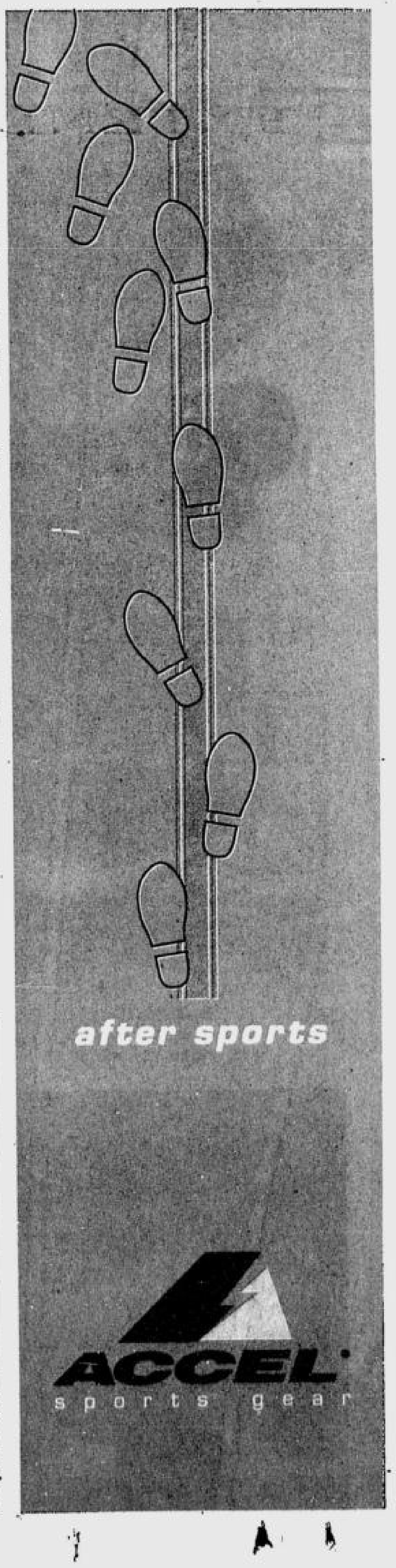

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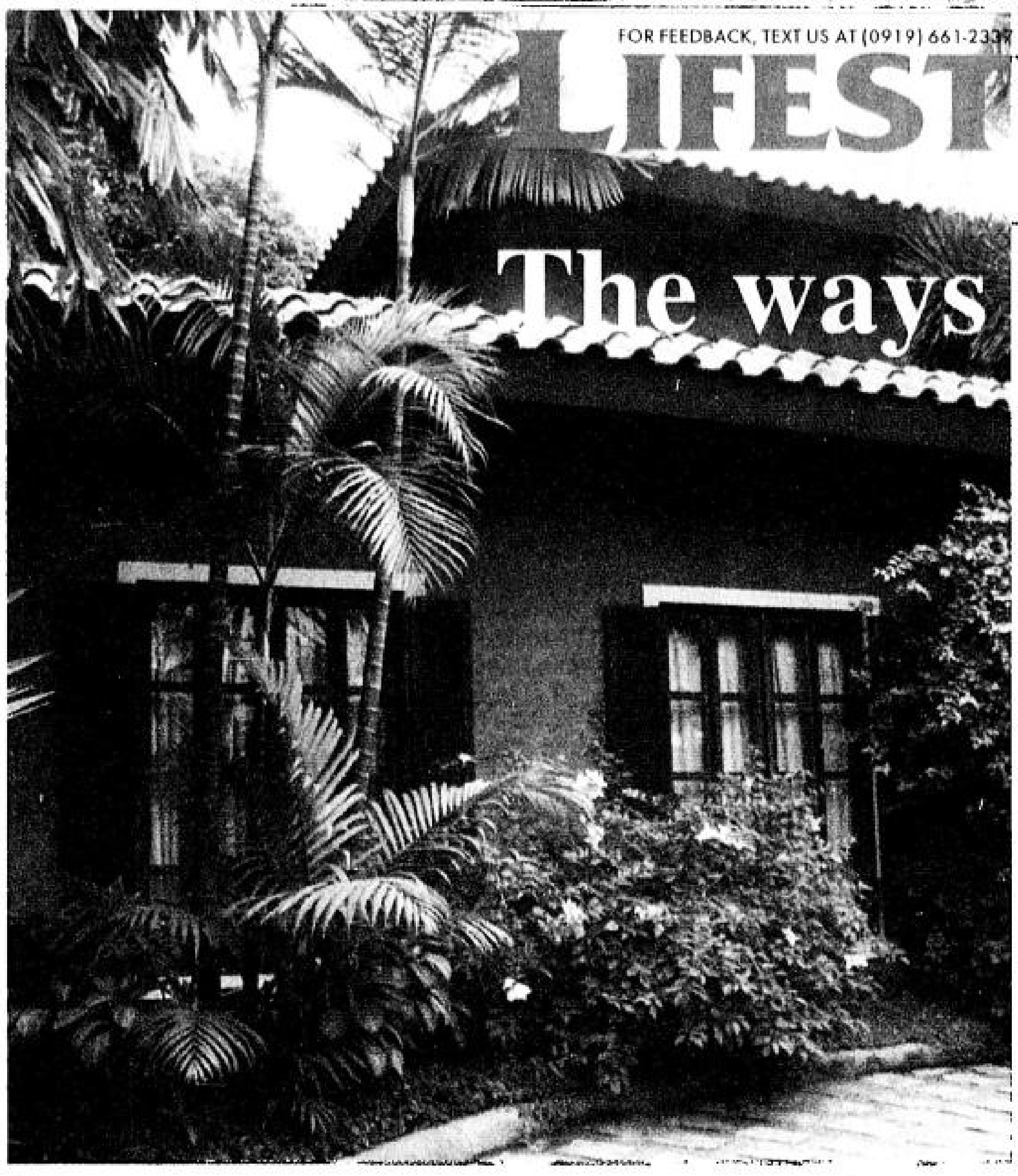

The ways of the genteel society

MEDITERRANEAN lines are interpreted with consistency, as shutters flank each side of the window and clay roof tiles protrude with dramatic and curvilinear uniformity.

(Story on page E2)

VINE-COVERED columns meet the wide eaves. The textures and richness of colors of domestic architecture enthrall.

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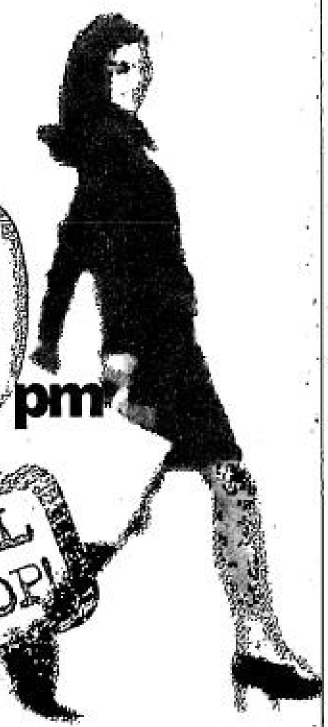
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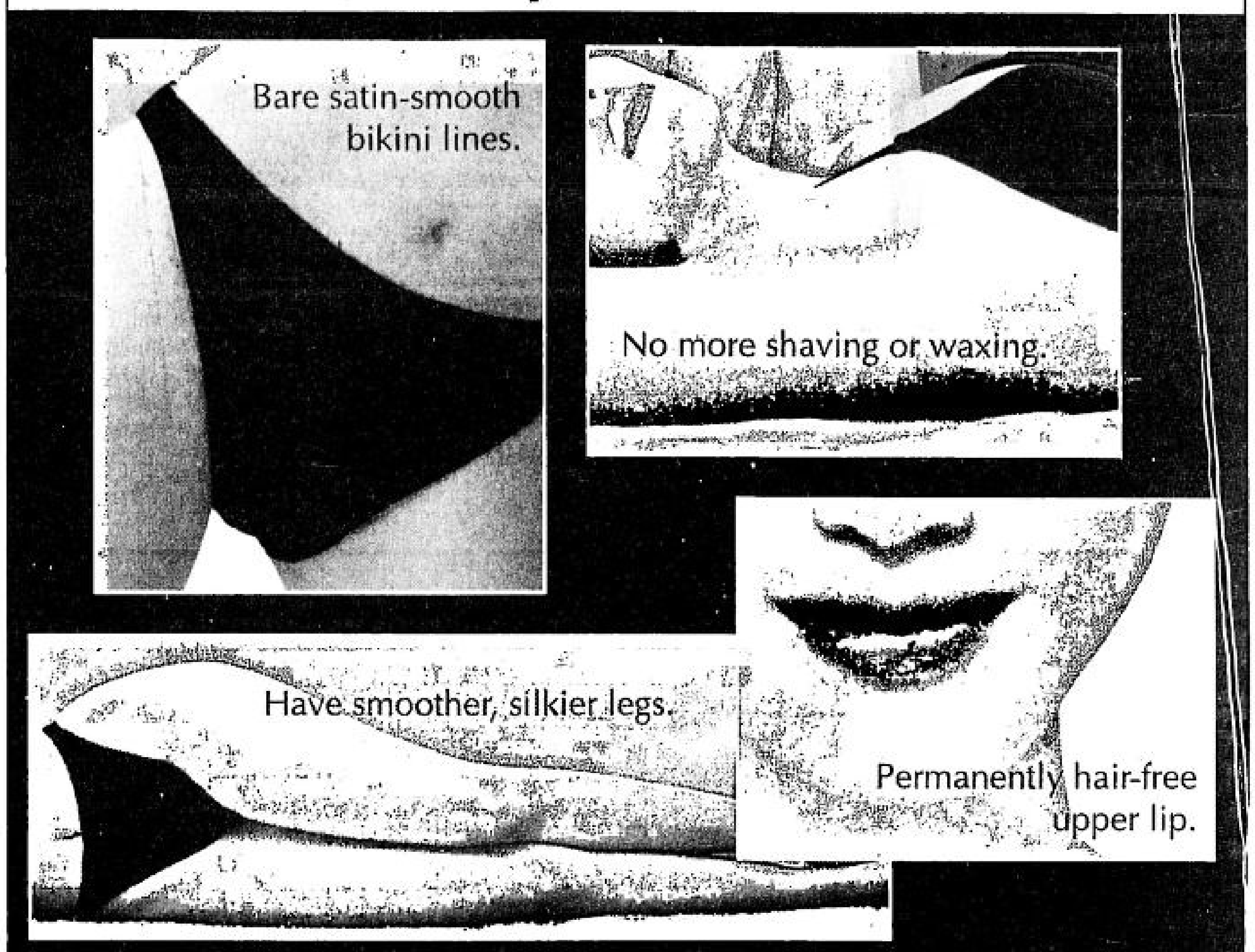
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Be Hair-Free in time for the Holidays.

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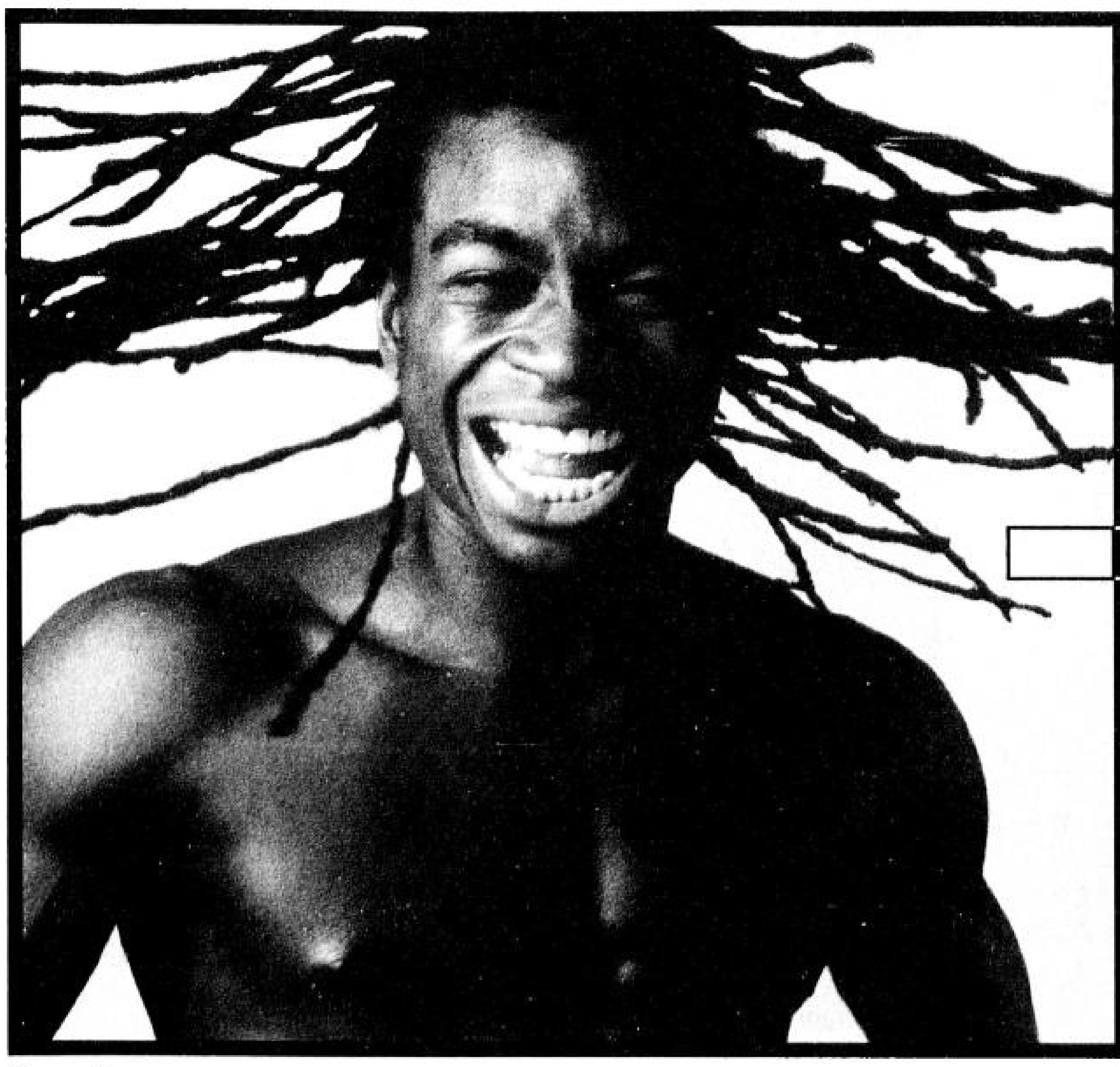

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A PASTICHE of collections in tortoiseshell—hair ornaments, accessories and other items—blend with the gilded frame of the mirror on the wall.

HANDCRAFTED detail on Asian tableware, with the holiday table spread, is refined and delicate.

CHRISTMAS brings a touch of red and warmth and inspires spirited and convivial gatherings surrounded by heirlooms kept through generations.

The ways of the genteel society

By Cathy Saldaña-Nolido
Contributor
Photos by Chito Vecina
VISUAL CONCEPT BY ALBERT AVELLANA

JUST when it seems architecture in the Philippines has been reduced to nothing but highly modern, concrete and glass structures, it is a pleasant surprise to discover a Mediterranean-inspired home that showcases the Filipinos' Spanish heritage.

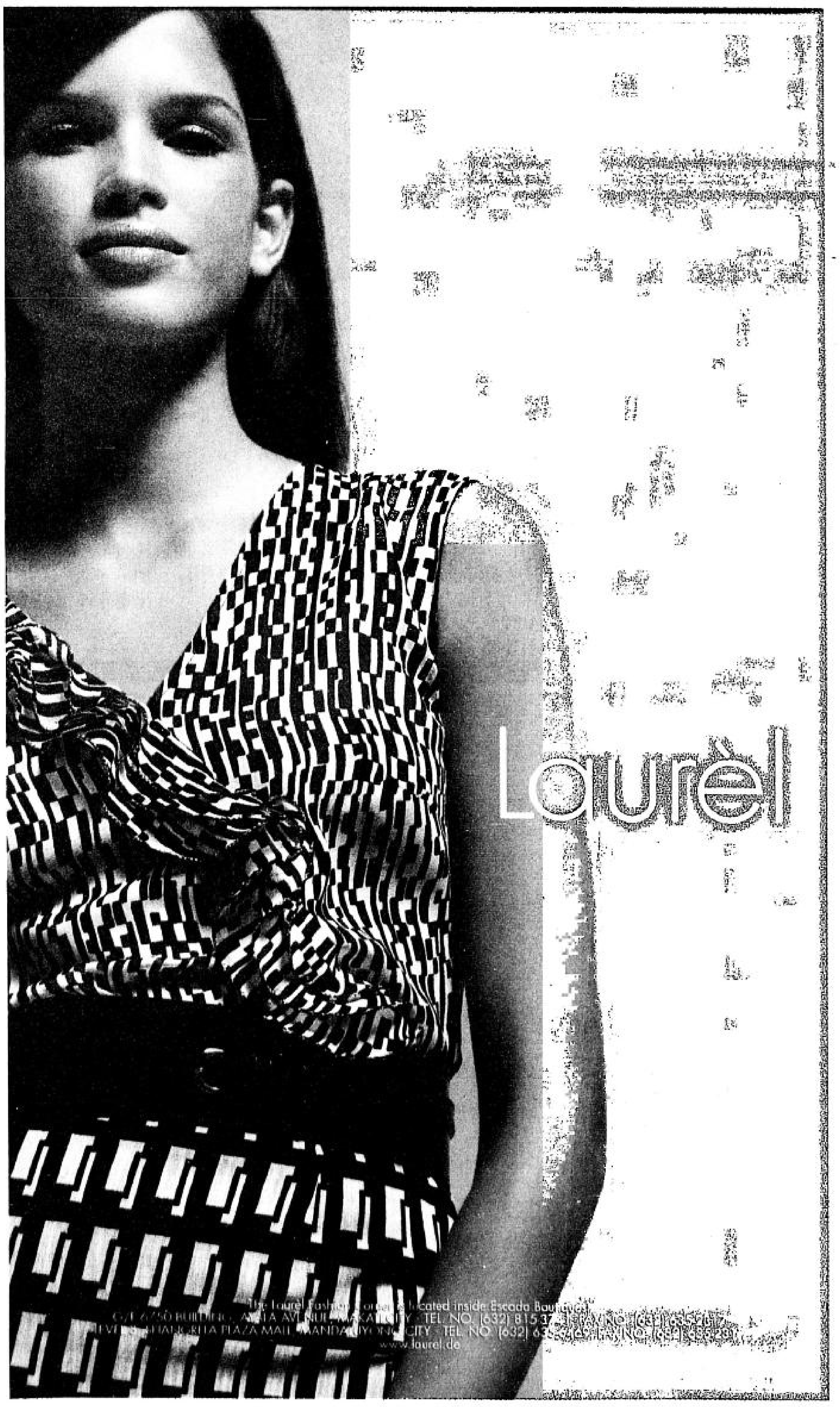
The classics are revered in the interiors and decoration of the noble house. Blending with the trimmings of Christmas, a pastiche of ornaments and beloved objets d'art fill up every corner of the house.

The rooms, intersecting with gracious open spaces beaming with light, radiates a genteel approach to living. Fine prints—floral, architectural and historical—dominate the walls in a formal arrangement befitting the home's elegance.

Complementing the exquisite furniture are in

THE WAYS/p.E6

THE MAGIC of silver and wood, exquisitely blending with fine china and embroidered linen, complements sumptuous meals traditionally laid out for the family.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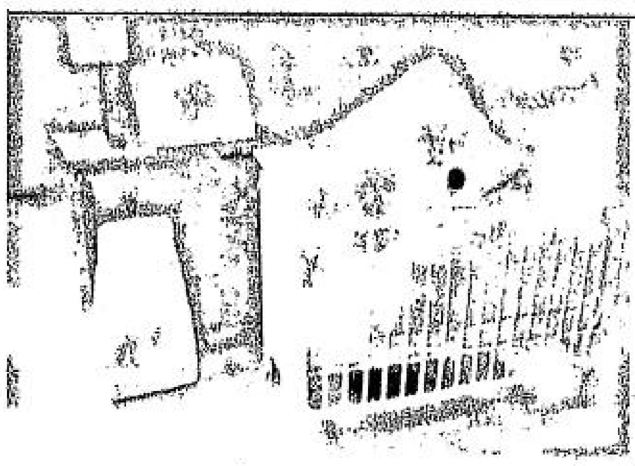
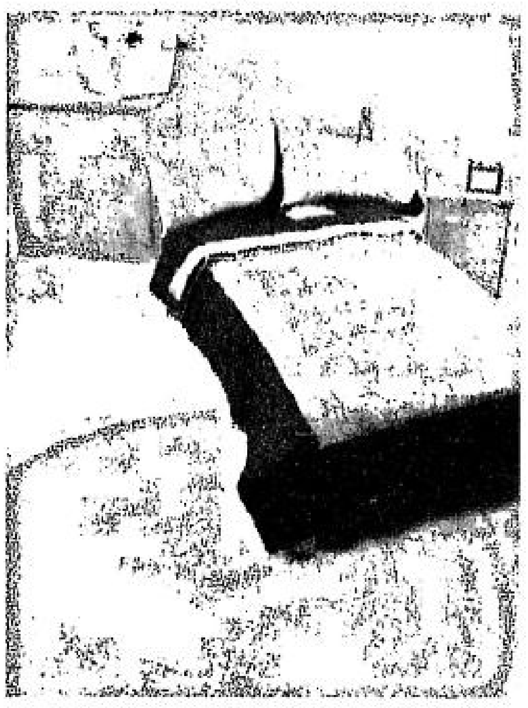
A WONDERFUL spread of intricate pieces in shell and fine porcelain creates mystique. The visual feast adorns each display table and highlights every corner.

PATTERNS and prints daringly mix with bright splashes of color on the upholstery and throw pillows. The coffee table has a random display of found objects. Floor ornaments provide points of interest on the clay tiles.



BABIES will want to snooze in this crib (P9,480) with matching baby playmat (P1,365), bumper (P1,455), changing bag (P652), diaper stacker (P492), crib sheet (P500) and bloster (set of two at P455)

GO choo-choo and swoosh with these locomotive and airplane photo frames from Area Kids. Each frame is at P700.



MOON and star beddings (P3,995/set) on the Thomas Bed (P11,800) with Thomas side table (P6,440). The pinewood dresser is at P9,800 while the tapered basket with yellow liner will store kiddie stuff at P1,360.

Home store targets kids' market

SEVEN years after the first Area Home Store in SM Megamall opened, it now has brought a new line with considerable children's appeal. Welcome Area Kids.

Couples who have registered for their shower and wedding gifts at Area will now find something more for their growing family with this new line of products.

New parents can furnish their nursery with a crib plus matching crib sheets, bolsters and play mats. These items also come with matching changing bags and diaper stacker. Beautiful picture frames for children are also available and make wonderful gifts.

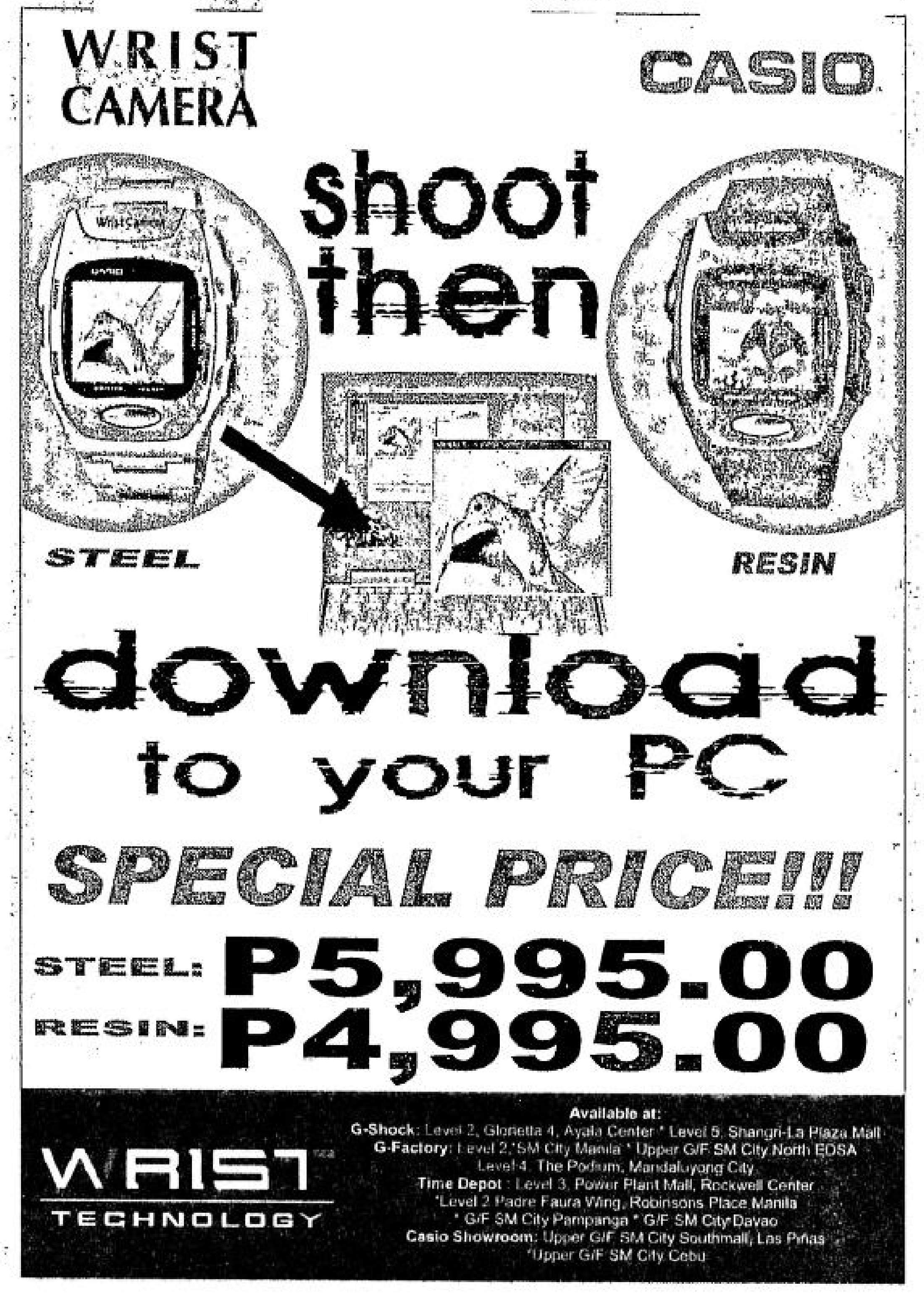
Area Kids carries incomplete set of furniture for toddlers. A living room set proportioned to toddlers is very popular among young children who feel they have something like what mom has in the living room. One will also find matching side tables, drawers and even hampers and lamps. Area Kids also offers complete sets of beddings that come in various designs. A simple bed with a matching step stool is also available to help the children climb up to their beds and help them reach the sink, too. Area rugs in various shapes and colors also add to the choices to make each child's room unique for your little one.

Since bath time is also a challenge, several bath toys are available. Crayon soaps and paint like soaps also make bath time lots of fun.

"Area Kids is great for us," says Kathleen Talmadge, who has two children aged 10 and 6. "It gives us the chance to shop for what our children would want. Last summer, when they were in the store, we were observing which items would catch their eyes and we were happy to see that they liked what we had on the shelves."

"We were also thrilled to have a very famous expectant mother who registered for her twins' shower. Everything she wanted was bought," she adds.

Area Home Stores are at SM Megamall, Alabang Town Center and Power Plant Mall in Rockwell Center.



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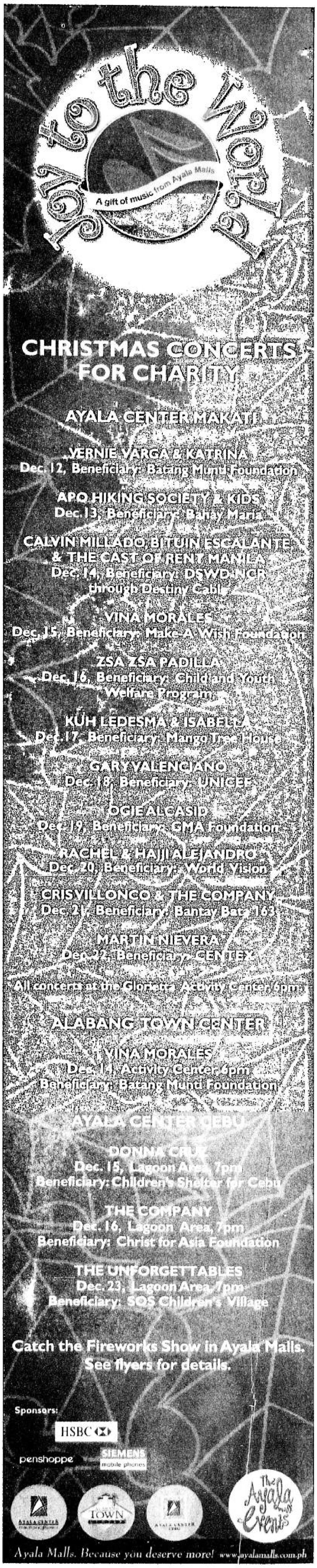
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Dec. 14, Beneficiary: DSWD-NCR through Destiny Cable

VINA MORALES
Dec. 15, Beneficiary: Make-A-Wish Foundation

ZSA ZSA PADILLA
Dec. 16, Beneficiary: Child and Youth Welfare Program

KUH LEDESMA & ISABELLA
Dec. 17, Beneficiary: Mango Tree House

GARY VALENCIANO
Dec. 18, Beneficiary: UNICEF

OGIE ALCASID
Dec. 19, Beneficiary: GMA Foundation

RACHEL & HAJJI ALEJANDRO
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CRIS VILLONCO & THE COMPANY
Dec. 21, Beneficiary: Bantay Bata 163

MARTIN NIEVERA
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER

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Dec. 14, Activity Center 6pm
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AYALA CENTER CEBU

DONNA CRUZ
Dec. 15, Lagoon Area, 7pm
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THE COMPANY
Dec. 16, Lagoon Area, 7pm
Beneficiary: Christ for Asia Foundation

THE UNFORGETTABLES
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Sotheby's names Philippine rep

By Donnie C. Ramirez
Contributor

SOTHEBY'S, one of the biggest fine art auctioneers in the world, recently announced the appointment of Maria Clara "Kim" Camacho as its representative in the Philippines. The appointment affirms Sotheby's strategic move to expand its business in Southeast Asia.

Henry Howard-Sneyd, managing director of Sotheby's China, says, "Sotheby's recognizes the tremendous potential of Filipino collectors in our auctions as well as their increasing participation in overseas auctions over the years."

Kim, who is married to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro "Lito" Camacho, has almost 20 years of business experience behind her. She worked with Seagram's in New York and, until recently, was connected with Rockwell Land Corp. She holds the distinction of being the first Filipina graduate of Harvard's Radcliffe College. She also completed her MBA with honors at Harvard Business School. She and Lito have six children.

At the cocktails announcing the appointment held at the Mandarin Oriental, familiar faces were Mikey and Lizette Cojuangco, Ching Montinola, Tereret Liboro, Sevie Santos, Daisy Payumo, Bobby and Tess Montelibano, Lina Litton, George Dysdale, Harash and Sharmila Hiranand, Ambassador-designate Josie Lichauco, George Ty, Brett O'Connor and Sotheby's Mok Kim Chuan.

Duty Free Christmas

CHRISTMAS started a month early at the Duty Free Shop when it treated its customers and special guests to a holiday concert of Regine Velasquez titled "30 Days Before Christmas." Also performing with Asia's Songbird was the Montserrat Male Choir conducted by Tonton Africa. Johnny Litton emceed the music-filled program.

Duty Free Phils. GM Michael Kho hosted an after-show cocktails. Familiar faces noted were Blue Mountain Greeting Cards franchise owner Harry Limtong with his beloved Jane de Joya, Cory Quirino, Thirdy Escaño, Mary Ann and Tina Tinio, Westin Philippine Plaza's Rose Libongco and Fashion Walk operations manager Debbie Ongsip.

"The main idea behind this event is to get people primed up for shopping," Kho said. "We have exciting promotions this season and even after the holidays, Duty Free customers can still benefit from our special discounts and promotional offers."

Meet Manila's newest deb

FOR PRETTY Karina Mantolino, the year 2001 is doubly memorable. Two days after she turned 18 last month, she was proclaimed one of Manila's Five Loveliest. A freshman at the Ateneo, she is the daughter of car dealer Joey Mantolino and the former Aggie Castillo, owner of the chic-y Regine's Salon in Makati.

Karina made her debut at the Makati Shangri-La. She was every inch a young princess in a dainty debutante's gown designed by Inno Sotto. Manila's younger set came in full force to greet one of their prettiest members, while others participated in the traditional cotillion and the offering of 18 roses. Noted were budding beau Vernon Venegas, who was Karina's *cotillion* partner, Angelo Reyes, Kako Marcalain, Viela Aquino, Paolo Teodoro, Ross Garcia, Andrea Reyes, Raul Francisco and Gabie Santiago (also one of Manila's Five Loveliest this year).

Karina's pediatricians, Dr. Asuncion Reloza and Dr. Aida Dizon, her baptismal godmother Mons Romulo-Tantoco, her grandma Regina Castillo of The Castle, her uncles Mel Meer and Joey Razon, and her aunts Lynne Razon and Jojo Castillo also attended the affair.

Pinoy pop

IT'S not every day that a rock band like Aegis or a female impersonator who calls himself (herself?) Ate Gay gets to perform before Don Jaime Zobel de Ayala and other similarly pedigreed folk. And how often does one get to see the legendary Sylvia La Torre perform live these days?

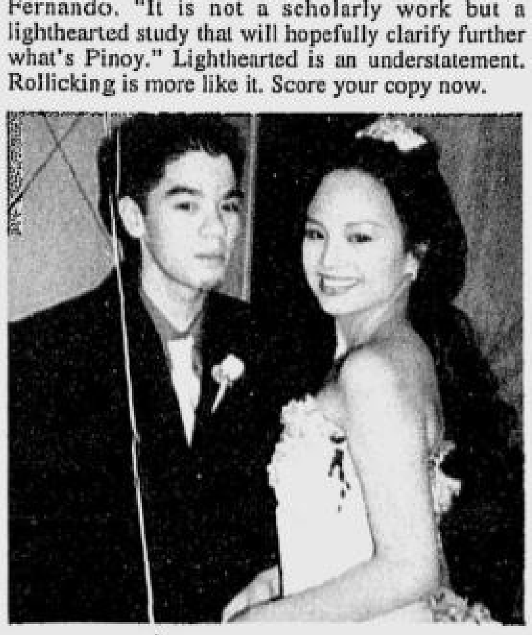
Well, all these happened at the launching of the seminal coffee-table book titled "Pinoy Pop Culture" at the NBC Tent in Camp Aguinaldo Global City. Published by Ben Chan of Bench, the book is coauthored by Gilda Cordero-Fernando and Manuel Chaves. The launch party, cooked up by Gilda herself in collaboration with Chan, Chaves and writer-director Floy Quintos, was a madcap concept event in the tradition of Gilda's two previous theoretical extravaganzas "Jamming on an Old Saya" and "Luna: An Aswang Romance." Whimsical, it certainly was, but also unique, outrageous and "give-*na*-give."

The NBC Tent was gaily transformed into a barrio fiesta setting. Guests were welcomed by ushers wearing shirts and skirts made from Bench wrappers. Food consisted of *bagoong* chicken wings, Reno liver spread sandwiches, egg *pan de sal* and Fita biscuits with *bangus* sardine mousse. The cocktail selection consisted of *dalandan-lambanog* coolers and Bencab's *kamias* shake. Gaita Fores definitely outdid herself with this one!

The fashion show was a gas! Among the "models" were Kidlat Tahimik (daring one and all in a *bahag*), gourmet Clinton Palanca, sexy chef Gene Gonzales, Makati Rep. Teddy Boy Locsin, Pinoy rock icon Joey Smith and Ernest Santiago, who wore a bridal gown!

As for the book itself, it's double the fun of its launching. It contains short stories written in "whatever's convenient," meaning English, Taglish, carabao English and even gay lingo. The subjects cover a wide variety of trivia that represent the true popular *masa* taste. There are illustrations and photos of Pinoy pop icons like comic character Kenkoy, spiritual leader Mike Velarde, Nora Aunor and the quintessential Tsinoy Ma Mon Luk.

"It is really a book on the Filipino," says Fernando. "It is not a scholarly work but a lighthearted study that will hopefully clarify further what's Pinoy." Lighthearted is an understatement. Rollicking is more like it. Score your copy now.



ANGELO Reyes and Karina Mantolino

MIKEY and Lizette Cojuangco, Ching Montinola, Kim Camacho, Tessie Montelibano, Tereret Liboro, Sevie Santos and Daisy Payumo

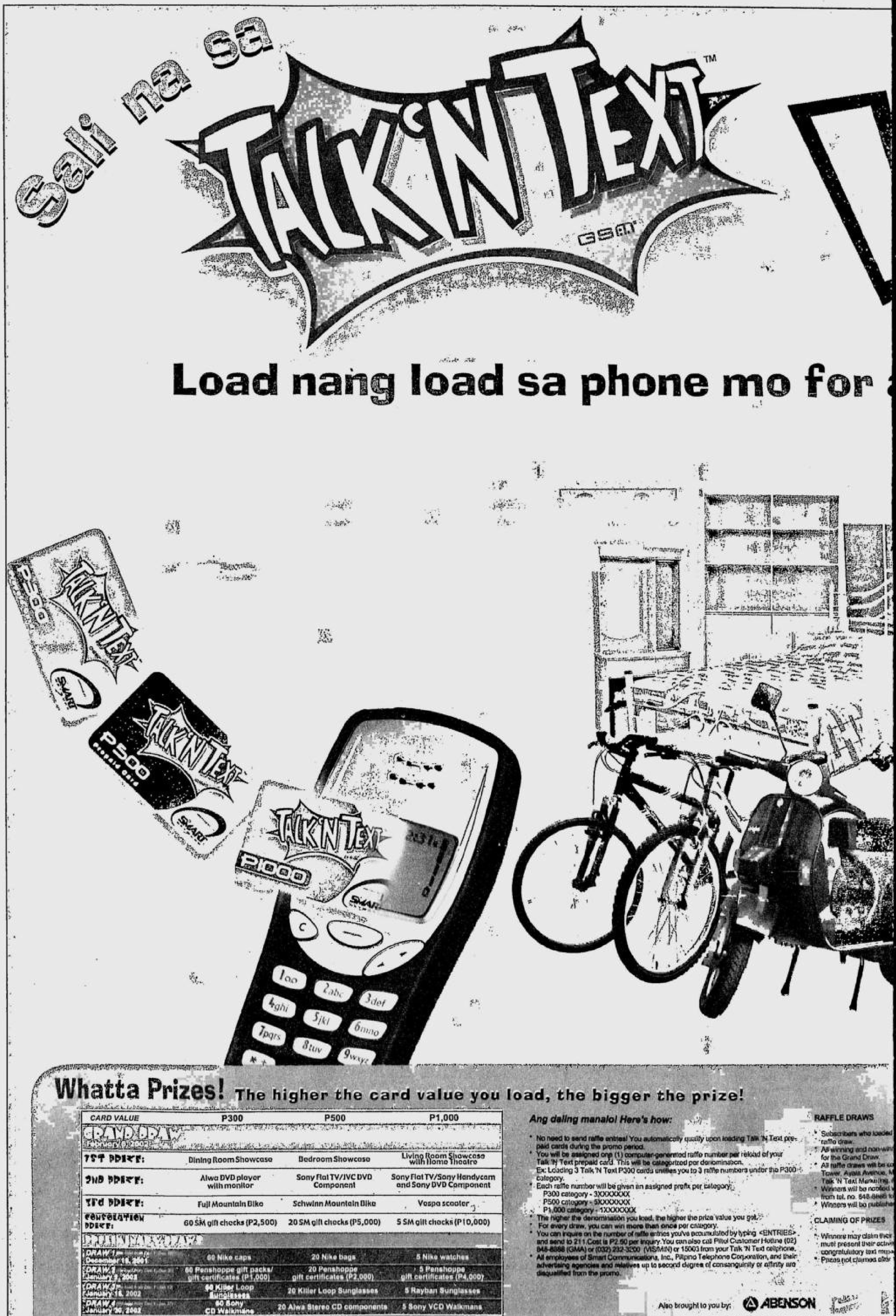
"PINOY POP" publisher Ben Chan and authors Gilda Cordero-Fernando and Manuel Chaves

MOK Kim Chuan and Henry Howard-Sneyd

HARESH and Sharmila Hiranand

FINANCE Secretary Lito Camacho and Lina Litton

DUTY Free Philippines general manager Michael Kho



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3RD PRIZE:	Fuji Mountain Bike	Schwinn Mountain Bike	Vespa scooter
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DRAW 1 December 18, 2001	60 Nike caps	20 Nike bags	5 Nike watches
DRAW 2 January 3, 2002	60 Penshoppe gift packs/ gift certificates (P1,000)	20 Penshoppe gift certificates (P2,000)	5 Penshoppe gift certificates (P4,000)
DRAW 3 January 16, 2002	60 Killer Loop Sunglasses	20 Killer Loop Sunglasses	5 Rayban Sunglasses
DRAW 4 January 30, 2002	60 Sony CD Walkmans	20 Aiwa Stereo CD components	5 Sony VCD Walkmans

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Vandalism hits Katipunan greening project

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

WHEN Annie S. Cruz joined the movement to beautify and green Katipunan Road in Quezon City, it was with the highest hopes that, with all stakeholders (the schools, businesses, banks, food outlets and residential villages) pooling their resources, the job could be done efficiently and fast.

Well, the job has been done well, but so is the work of vandals who take advantage of other people's hard work for their own benefit.

This was Annie's initial feedback after this column, which reported on "The greening of Katipunan," appeared in the Nov. 9 issue. She sounded heartbroken, as she and her project teammates must surely be, over this sad turn of events.

The vandalism consists of the pilferage of flowers planted on walkways and overpass plant boxes on Katipunan. It is a sad thing because the flowers have started to bloom. It was in the project schedule the bougainvillas would be in full bloom by December, and so they are, except for those that have been snipped off or completely uprooted. There are now gaping spots in the places where they once grew. The bougainvilleas were donated by civic organizations, business establishments, schools, students and concerned individuals. They have been planted in designated areas by MMDA gardeners, helped out by DPWH workers.

Along with flower-planting, there are other beautification activities such as scrubbing off all election posters from walls along the road, and giving a new coat of paint to guard rails and posts, as well as street gutters and kerbs.

The second phase of the greening project starts this December and the flowering bougainvilleas were supposed to mark the occasion. Their red, purple and pink blooms were to show the results of the first phase. The sight of the empty spots in the flower boxes could dishearten lesser spirits, but not the people behind the project, like Annie.

In her feedback, she enumerated the institutions, establishments, groups and individuals that gave their wholehearted support to the greening idea. It seems ironic, she says, that the efforts of so many could be undermined by the irresponsible acts of a few.

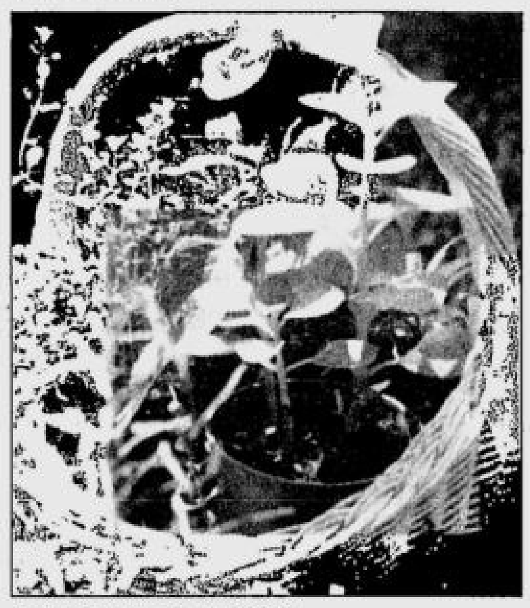
Those responsible for the pilferage are, thankfully, just a few, for a bigger number would have destroyed a bigger area. The project team, says Annie, wonders who these pilferers are. Are they from Katipunan using the project for their selfish purposes? Are they garden thieves who wish to stock up on plants with no cost to themselves? Are they plain vandals who like to destroy things for the fun of it?

While the possibilities are pondered on, the vandalism points to other hitches in the project that would not be so irritating if they were the only negative aspects under consideration. Now these other problems seem big as well. She enumerates some of them:

Some portions of the guard rail (supplied by the MMDA) in the center islands have been broken. The rails are meant to prevent pedestrians from crossing the road and to encourage use of the overpasses instead. How the rail bars were cut is another mystery because it would require a welding machine or saw to cut them.

The presence of informal families (the recommended way of referring to squatter families) underneath the overpasses opposite Miriam College has created problems of garbage and obstruction of use of the street facilities. Appeals have been made to the families to maintain order, cleanliness and security, but this problem cannot be resolved overnight.

There are other measures being taken up to ensure that Katipunan's greening can go on without any more hitches. Though project participants' feelings have been dampened somewhat by these problems, they have not lost their enthusiasm. They are more determined than ever to get the job done. After all, greening and beautification include getting rid of all kinds of rubbish and eyesores, especially the destructive kind.



DELIGHTFUL HERBS

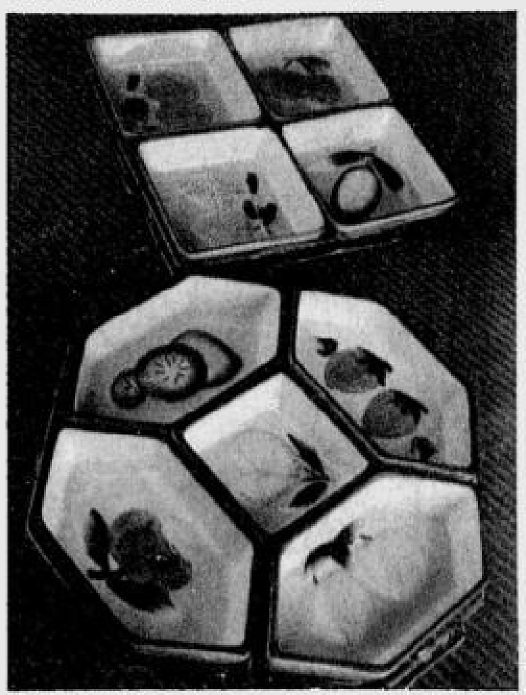
A basket of organically grown and fragrant culinary herbs makes a delightful Christmas present. One can place the basket or individual pots at the table for guests to nibble on during and after meals. Or one can start a garden by transplanting the herbs in the yard. Domini's Farm offers baskets and individual pots of herbs such as basil, rosemary, tarragon, oregano, mint, thyme, coriander, lemon balm and chives at the Tesda (Technical Education and Skills Development Authority) weekend market. Call 631-1466 or (0917) 371-8042.

Country life in the city

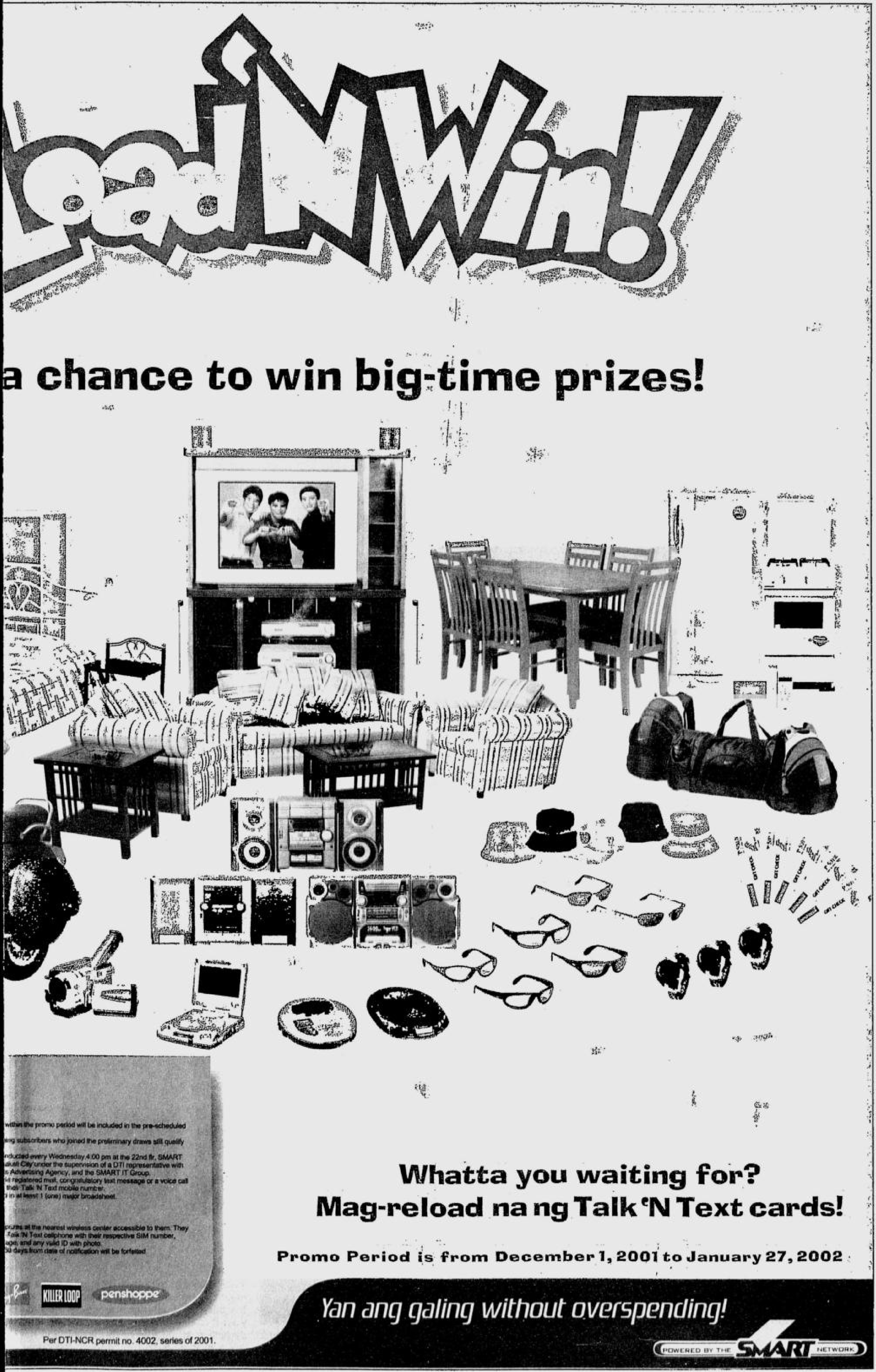
CROSSINGS Department Store's Home Haven section offers an interesting array of tableware and other housewares, furnishings and novelty items suited for today's modern homes.

The selection includes plates, bowls, mugs, cups, jars, canisters, flatware and other kitchen and table utensils—in designs ranging from simple and neat patterns to colorful fruit-and-vegetable and floral blooms or country-inspired motif.

Check out the various local and foreign brands of home furnishings and other functional items and accessories at the Home Haven, located at the third level of the shopping arena. Crossings Department Store is located within Shangri-La Mall, Rizal Avenue, Manila, and Quezon Avenue, QC.



SEGMENTED octagonal ceramic dish and square dish with vegetable garden design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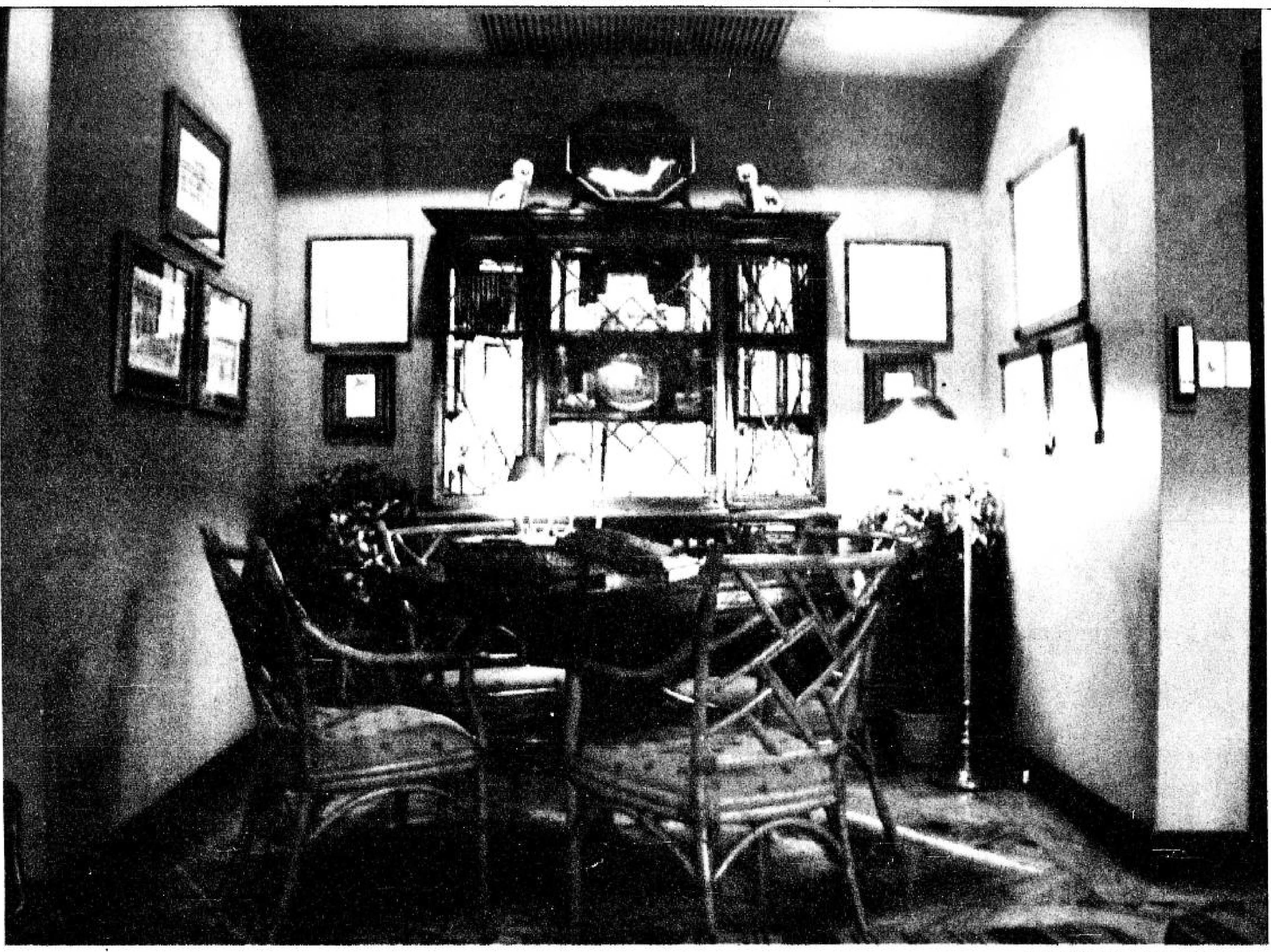


THE DEN is a picture of elegance, with well-known patterns of the past and a mix of furnishings and accents that highlight personal objects and sentimental portraits.

The ways of the genteel society

Typical of a Filipino home, it is filled with objects—but done in good taste

(From page E2)

tricately detailed collections in ivory, silver and tortoiseshell, beguiling to the touch. Each table showcases a particular collection of a unique material represented by antique fans and other delicate handiwork. Like the attractively arranged gifts under the tree, the personal collections offer a visual delight in ivory, silver and tortoiseshell. The mirrors are gilded and filigree is abundant, giving surprising delicate touches to corners and hallways.

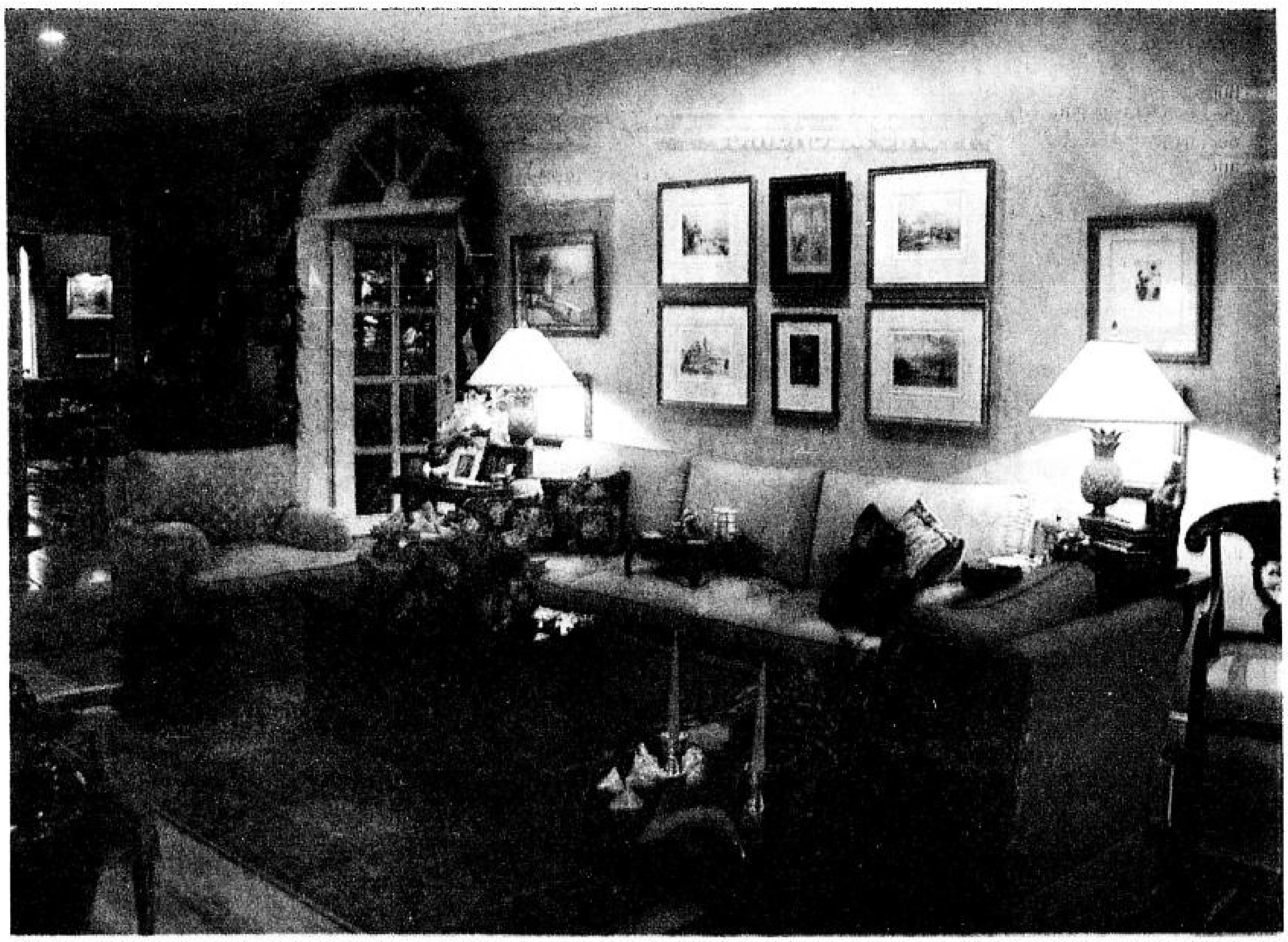
On the walls, treasured ceramic wares are mounted on wooden sconces and classical brackets. Colors are rich and profuse with emotion. The hues and prints are bold, solidly set against the richness of the *narra* wooden flooring. Fluid patterns are traced on some wallpaper, rugs and upholstery. Oriental figure sculptures speak of the endless charm of clay and terracotta. Lanai furnishings bring the coziness outdoors. Chosen pieces in wood and stone delight the eyes with their intricate details.

Mix and match

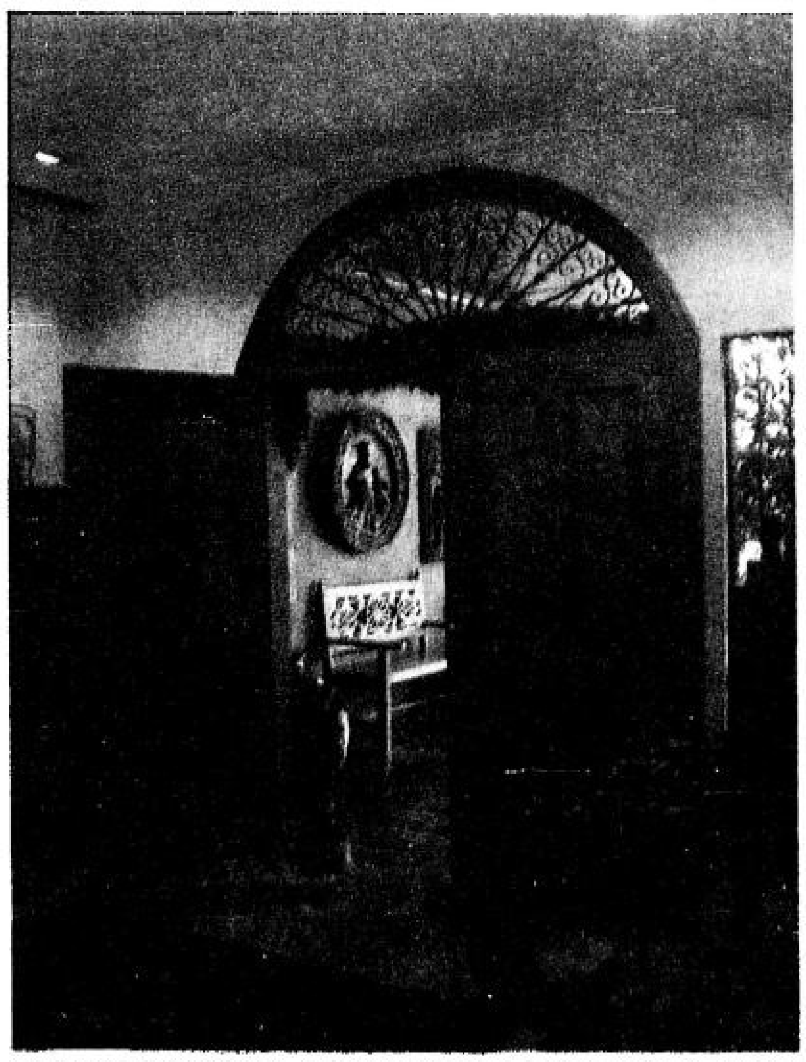
The sensual mix of materials—glass *virinas*, wooden benches, stone accents—creates an atmosphere conducive to uninterrupted relaxation. By the side of the pool, the relaxing sound of rushing water makes for a completely sensuous experience.

In keeping with the goal to keep tradition

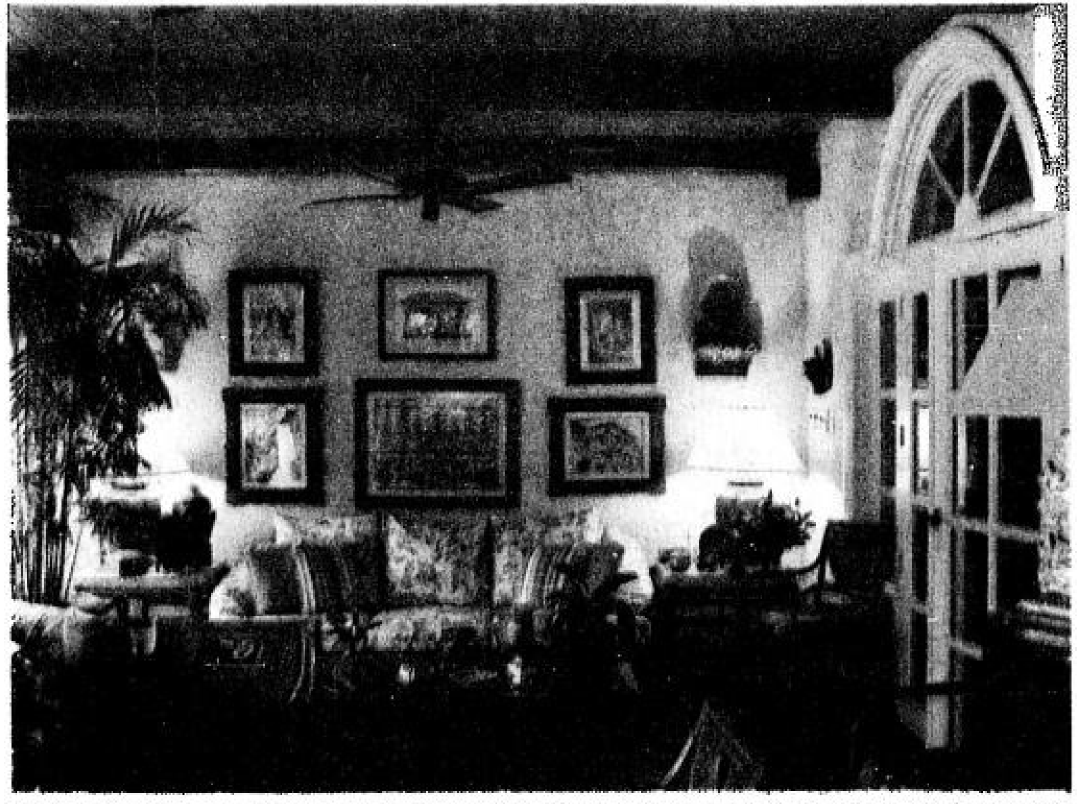
THE WAYS/p.E7



FINE prints and a treasure trove of paintings look majestic on the walls and halls of this classic home, merging old Hispanic traditions with little and simple touches of the East.



WELCOMING doors in solid narra panels are accented with the grandeur of rich ironwork, befitting the family heritage.



FILIPINO artists are highlighted in this collection of paintings evoking architectural nostalgia in pen and ink, watercolor and oil. Wall brackets bring 3D wit on expansive spaces as lazy fans cool the siesta hours.

THE FOYER gives an elegant greeting, matching the sheen of a polished floor with the burst of rough-hewn stone by the driveway. It is all-embracing and expansive, already hinting at the rhythm of tradition and nostalgia in this Mediterranean-inspired home.

POTTED ferns and palms give a burst of greenery amid stone and clay on the border of the lanai.

LANAI splendor is spelled out in a most relaxing fashion—wicker and soft furnishings, wood and glass bursting with the elegance of clay and terra cotta. The extension of the indoor spaces and the collection of objets d'art bridge the gap between the interiors and the garden.

The ways of the genteel society

(From page E6)

alive, antique photographs of family members inspire nostalgia and evoke memories of times gone by.

The predominantly Mediterranean theme of the architecture shows an inclination toward the Spanish heritage. The unpretentious design is appropriate to the lineage of the occupants. Windows are shuttered and columns are symmetrical, following true Mediterranean proportions. Arches are where they should be, boldly declaring entrances and heralding hallways. The lanai's Vigan-tiled floors share the warmth of the *narra* wooden planks in the main house. In the main portico, rough-hewn adobe are strewn in a uniform fashion.

European traditions blend seamlessly with intimate touches of the East. Spanish lamps and accents in one section mix smoothly with the Oriental theme in the den, anchoring the wicker chairs and comfortable lounge seats adjacent to an elegant screen.

The classics are interpreted with resounding glory in the home, which is designed and decorated with utmost consistency, making its theme relevant and resonant. The house embraces the concepts of the Mediterranean classic even as it brings in a few touches of Filipino and Asian, through artifacts.

It is a showcase of good, refined tastes, offering a glimpse of exciting travels to distant lands in each corner and displaying nostalgic pieces in strategic location. Ornaments and found objects reflect the lush experiences of the occupants.

Values, sentiments and warmth are evident in the collections, private and personal, the owners have laid out. In this classic home, the timeless heritage of the family lives on and each new year is welcomed with the same graciousness displayed through the years.

E-mail the author at cnolido@aimonline.org

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All-in-One Wagon	545.00	595.00	635.00
Electronic Shot Clock Basketball	280.00	330.00	350.00
Little Landscaper Garden Hand Tools & Watering Cans	55.00	55.00	60.00
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☐	Studio Design Table and Chairs	5,000.00	2,500.00		
☐	Roar n Rev Monster Truck	9,000.00	4,500.00		
☐	All-in-One Wagon	15,500.00	7,750.00		
☐	Electronic Shot Clock Basketball	8,500.00	4,250.00		
☐	Little Landscaper Hand Tools and Watering Cans	535.00	267.50		
☐	Sleepytime Express Toddler Bed	25,000.00	12,500.00		
			Sub-total		
			+ Delivery Charge *(for areas outside Metro Manila)*		
			GRAND TOTAL		

Items	DELIVERY CHARGES		
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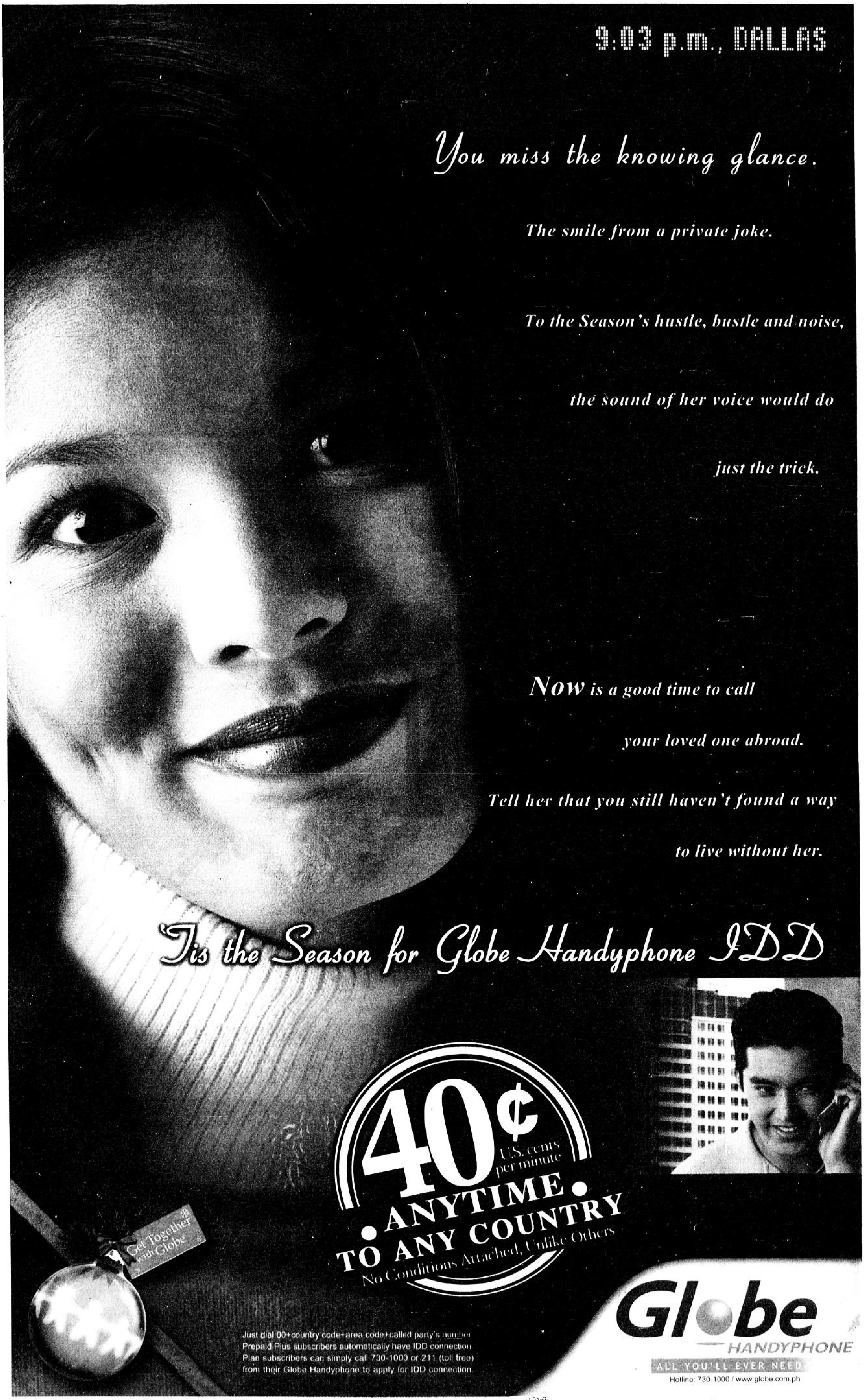

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Trend Spotting

LIFESTYLE

My pre-Christmas semi-lunacy

AS Christmas draws near you get the feeling that people's mood is swinging between melancholy and stress. Melancholy because the year came and went in a blur, with things and people (including a Beatle), who were somehow signposts in your lifestyle, vanishing as if in a snap. This sense of obvious impermanence makes you ponder, yet makes you want to hang tight to moments you love. Stress because you're trying to beat deadlines of productivity, given the little time left before another year. I sensed as much in the two kinds of e-mail I got in reaction to my column "You in a holiday mode?"

A Makati executive searches and finds her own holiday mood: "I was walking on Ayala Avenue. *Nandoon pa lang ako* in front of the SGV building when I heard a strange sound from across the street! It sounded like an orchestra! When I finally crossed, I saw that there indeed was an orchestra playing at the fountains. What was more surprising was that there was a huge crowd of office workers watching the free concerts. Musical number after musical number, the applause kept coming. The orchestra (I found out later it was the Philippine Philharmonic under the baton of **Ruggero Barbieri**) played a medley of Christmas carols and that was when it hit me! *Pasko na nga*! I resumed my walking and somehow the lanterns on Ayala seemed brighter after that!"

In contrast, another executive is just keeping his eye on the ball: "You hit it right on the head when you said people are not bent on spending this holiday season, as much as they are on earning something extra and saving it for a rainy day. The government doesn't get it. We don't need a long Christmas break. All we need is political will. We need sound governance. Please give the people some breathing space. If you can't help us, don't get in our way. While we are not destitute, everyone is having difficulty. There are middle-class people like us who are purposefully striving to build a secure future despite all the uncertainties."

Plunge into activities

Me, I'm going past thinking and feeling and just letting myself be carried away in the whirl of pre-Christmas to-dos, which, by the way, Metro Manila is not running short of, despite the bleak times. People are determined to plunge into their activities, from launches to shopping and sports.

I'm in that whirlpool. Call it pre-Christmas semi-lunacy.

In my home, it's the mom who comes home with a black eye, not the boys. That was what my son said last Saturday when I got home frantically looking for an ice compress. My left eye was black and blue. My first taste of being a battered tennis player. (My boss would remind me later that tennis is not a contact sport.)

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

At sundown in a not-yet-lit indoor court, this speeding ball found my eye before my Wilson racket could. I missed my volley. I went hard into training that Saturday, after getting my first taste of beating (demolition, more like it) in my first-ever match two Sundays before that. I was talked into the Tennistars tournament at PNOC by its indefatigable president **Robert Mananquil**

MY/ p.F2

A black eye,
a 'shoplifter's' bag—this
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thinking and just let
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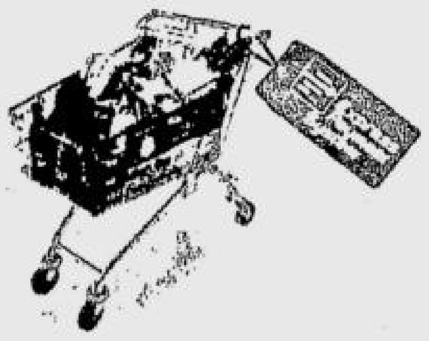

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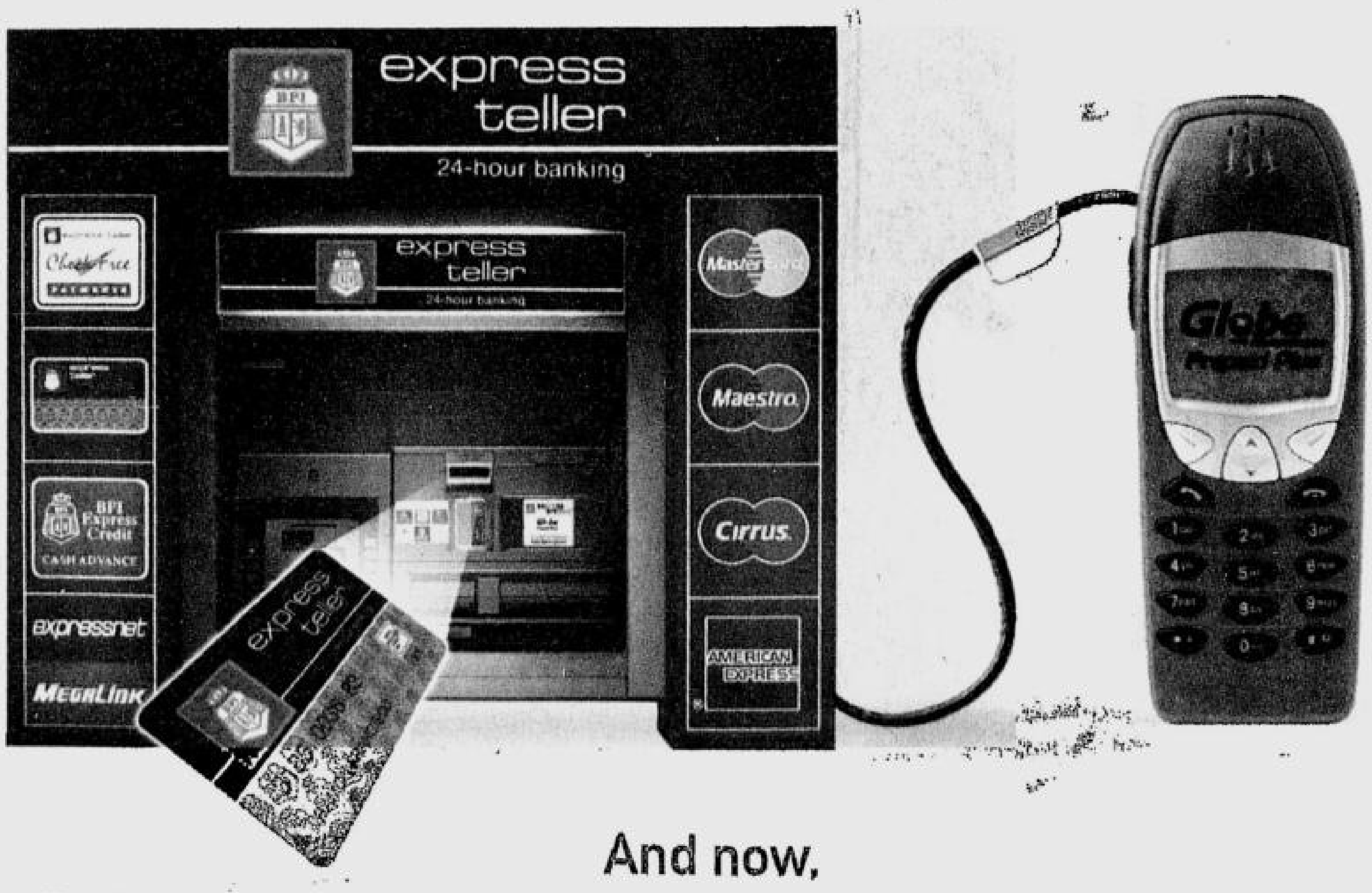

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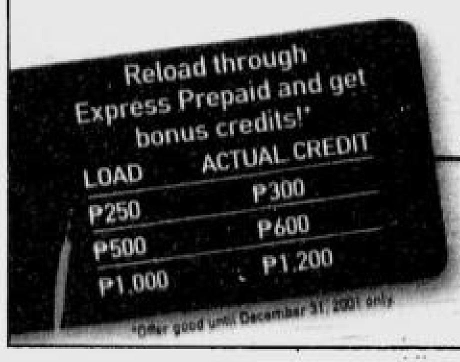

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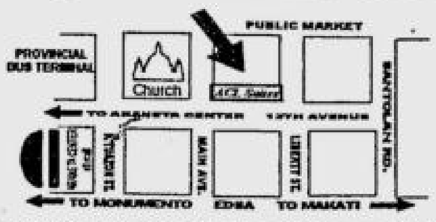

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FREE ADMISSION

My pre-Christmas semi-lunacy

(From page F1)

and Manila Times managing editor **Fort Yerro**. For had good faith in my tennis, Robert's wife **Millet** (the other Lifestyle editor), who didn't stop texting me until I showed up, had blind faith in my tennis. Of course, both were proved wrong before noon. Not even the almighty tennister **Vergel Santos**, who was my partner that Sunday morning, could salvage my game. Eight-to-one, we lost to Austrian Ambassador **Christian Krepela** and his wife. Back in the office the next day, a Benpres colleague chided me that had our opponents not been diplomats, it would have been 8-0 (see how I am really loved by the tennis addicts in our corporate jungle).

Demolished sense of self-esteem aside, however, I enjoyed my debut with the Tennistars, the Pat H. Gonzales Memorial Cup, which pitted the newsmen against the newsmakers. It was my first time in years to reunite with old colleagues like Star's **Jess Diaz** and Manila Standard's **Don Reyes**, who must have been looking away while I was in that bloodbath.

This yearly event brings together a fun group of tennis junkies, the few newsmen who didn't stray into golf, including the veteran **Nemesio Dacanay**, formerly of Herald. This year, Robert mobilized an impressive list of diplomats and business executives, including Singapore Ambassador **Jacky Foo**, Austrian Trade Commissioner **Dr. Harwalik**, Swiss Deputy Chief of Mission **Peter Casualta**, **Rodney Bell** of the British Trade Council, **Gauri Shanker Gupta** of the Indian embassy, PNOC-EC president **Rufino Bomasang**, Games and Amusements Board Commissioner **Angel Bautista**, Caltex executive **Adel Madamba**, PNOC executive **Debbie Diokno**.

There's another tournament in January, and this time I'll tell Millet that faith, without novenas, won't be enough if I stray into the PNOC court again.

Commitment to everything Pinoy

Last Saturday, I went malling with the kids, and to cap my luck, the sensors in stores would sound off every time I passed them to leave, you know, as if a shoplifter were exiting. Each time, I'd be stopped by the store clerk and my bag checked. Bad enough that my boys were with their mom sporting a black eye, but a black-eyed "shoplifting" Mama?

Turned out, it was the buckle in my luxury-brand bag. (**Alya Honasan** would tell me later she read somewhere that a batch of Manolo Blahnik shoes was recalled because their titanium heels produced a similar effect at airports.)

If store clerks are on high alert these days it must be because, I learned from a retail shop owner, shoplifting is at its peak these days. The times being what they are, people must be busy not so much as shopping as shoplifting.

For a change, even given the hard times, I didn't hear doomspeak from **Marni Ocampo** of Sari-Sari. "We're not complaining," she said about their sales, which, she claimed, were steady and which they expect to pick up on the third week of December. By now, they're used to business kicking up only near Christmas.

But it's not the sales that impress me most about Sari-Sari. It's their steadfast commitment to Filipino designers and everything Pinoy, which is really what Sari-Sari has stood for the past 16 years. While other stores are awash in cheap clothes from China or prohibitively priced brands, Sari-Sari hasn't stopped discovering young ready-to-wear designers whose directions are as varied as their backgrounds. Its lines are nearly universal, from a one-of-a-kind formals done by a young designer who prefers to be anonymous for now, to the wedding ensembles of **Michelle Lim** who experiments with indigenous fibers, to the witty punkish daywear of **Roman Roxas** and **April Castañeda**, to the Me casuals of **JV Perez**. It takes determination and solid vision these days to nurture home-grown talents whose mettle will be tested by a young market whose tastes are fickle, whose style is not only updated but forward-looking, and whose loyalty to any brand, store or country is nonexistent. It is brave gamble to sustain yet-untested designer lines when it's more expedient to go by formulaic imports.

THE OCAMPOS (from left) Anna, Margie, Aleth and Marni with Sari-Sari bosom friend Sharon Cuneta

"While sticking to our Pinoy vision, we have great flexibility. That's how we rode the 'imported' wave," Marni told us one night last week as we chilled out in the Sari-Sari café at Rockwell.

What I've seen in Marni and her family partners **Aleth Ocampo Mapa**, **Anna Ocampo Sarmiento** and **Margie Ocampo** the past decade wasn't only flexibility but a healthy sense of adventure where merchandise development and mix were concerned. It helps, of course, that they travel regularly to catch the drift. They're able to blend this keen exposure with a strong sense of market, be it in clothes, fashion accessories or home décor. Now, they're into food. Their café, whose Pinoy fusion menu was developed by **Reggie Aspiras**, has dishes that draw your curiosity because they depart from the trite offerings. Take for example, the *kalabasa* with apple chips or the pesto pasta with asparagus. It's Aleth who cooks these dishes and bakes the bread. The Ocampos will soon open a string of restaurants.

As we survey the state of holiday local retail, Sari-Sari is a ray of hope because it proves that a good faith in Pinoy talent can be sustainable business.

That Budji energy

Every **Budji Layug** event at his B at Home on Reposo is worth braving the early evening Makati traffic for. That was still the case last week at the opening of **Lito Carating**'s exhibit at Budji's and Movement 8's showroom. The event was also held in honor of Citem head **Eli Pinto**, who has retired from the government firm and whose portrait done by Budji and displayed at the showroom the guests loved.

Budji wanted it to be an upbeat dancing party so the dance/house/techno music filled the house. Budji, solo, danced the night away. He was in high spirits, and had Bangkok in his design mind and heart.

The design scene will miss Eli the mover, whose taste and drive helped spell the difference for the Filipino home designers on the world market. The members of the multiawarded Movement 8, a well-bonded group by now after years of trade fairs abroad, were there. It was good to hear from **Ann Pamintuan**, **Milo Raval**, **Luisa Robinson** and the others that the high-end home design business is hardly affected by the US recession, because it's the European demand that's keeping them busy.

Lito moves on in his paintings. This time he's eschewed bright colors and uses the fast-drying acrylics to achieve textures in such interesting variety that from afar their surface looked like fabrics. In fact, it was acrylic handled with baking utensils to achieve the ultra-fine, delicately sharp effect. His paintings on the wall were in silver, gold, various hues of bronze, the colors inspired by his travel to Spain, with its structures given the patina of time.

Among the guests was **Lor Calma**, who told us that his three-story glass monument will soon be unveiled at The Fort. Also there was **Oskar Atendido** who was busy gathering designers and models from the '60s and '70s for a Dec. 12 reunion at the home of **Chito Madrigal Collantes**, the woman under whose direction flourished the luncheon fashion series at Hyatt's La Concha. Oskar had invited **Inno Sotto**, **Auggie Cordero**, **Mike de la Rosa**, **Ernest Santiago**, even the rarely seen **Pando**, who's now into painting, and ramp icons led by **Minnie Cagatao Jentes**. These were the people who gave birth to the golden age of Filipino fashion in the '70s, who thrived on creation, competition and bitchy fashion reviews. The breed that has more than paid its dues.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

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Dan Vicente V. Papa, son of Dr. and Ms Dante I. Papa, will excahange marriage vows with Abigail Gutierrez, daughter of Mr. and Ms Ignacio Gutierrez, on Dec. 16 at Caleruega Church, Batulao, Nasugon, Batangas.

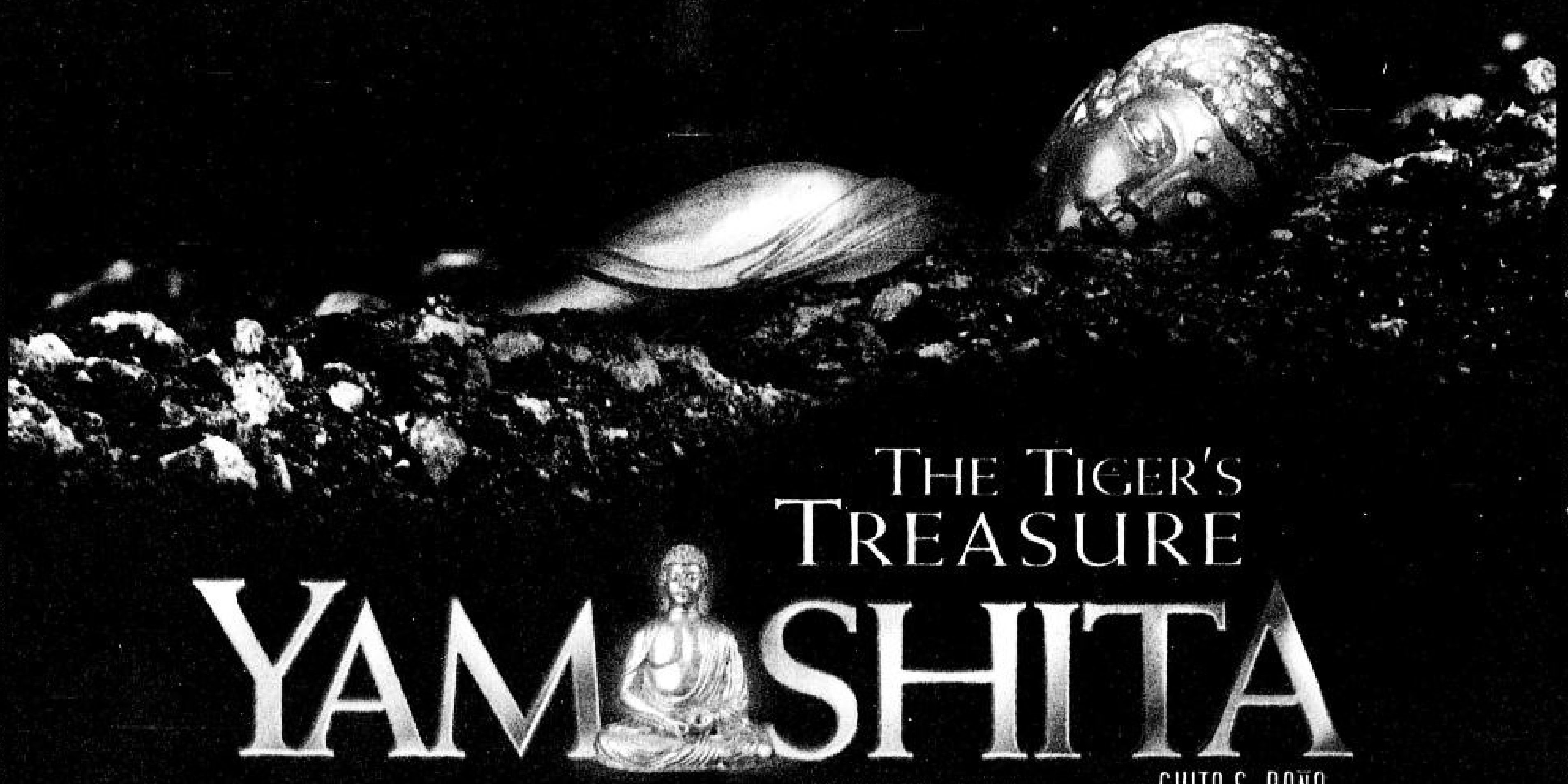
Fragrance defines new woman

TOM Ford's new fragrance for Yves Saint Laurent, nu, was launched recently at the wine bar Shiraz with local fashion writers and a select few of Manila's stylish set attending.

Nu, being launched the world over for the Fall/Winter 2001 season, is the newest addition to the revered Yves Saint Laurent line of perfumes. Ford's premiere effort to continue the French house's legacy, nu defines a new Saint Laurent woman: mysterious, complex, and always in control. She is enigmatic and a seductress who chooses not to reveal all of her secrets at once.

The new YSL perfume is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. and is available in leading department stores nationwide.

RUSTAN'S Anton Huang is flanked by models Colette Centeno and Angel Aquino.



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5. Only computer-generated points collected from December 12, 2001, 6 AM up to and including 12 midnight of December 31, 2001 will be counted and qualify for the promotion.
6. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
7. Draw will be held on January 2, 2002, 11 AM at the 27th floor, Smart Tower Bldg., Ayala Avenue, Makati City in the presence of a DTI representative.
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Cell phone extravaganza at malls

"GLOBEVOLUTION," the ultimate cellular madness, recently invaded malls and left consumers in a frenzy.

The biggest cell phone extravaganza was presented by Globe Handyphone with its partner manufacturers: Nokia, Samsung, Sendo, Siemens and Sony Ericsson, who designed practical and affordable ways to own a phone. "Globevolution" booths were set up at Glorietta, SM Megamall, SM North Edsa, Alabang Town Center, SM Manila, Ayala Center Cebu and SM Davao.

Aside from the specially marked-down prices of phones, the "Globevolution" offered raffle prizes and giveaways for those who downloaded ring tones and logos. Sim packs were marked down and buyers were entitled to a free P100-loaded BPI Express Cash Card, on top of the P150 additional prepaid bonus if you make the first call. The newly launched BPI Express Cash Card (BECC), which also comes with P100 bonus call credit, is the most convenient way to autoload prepaid credits.

Globevolution, which was held from Nov. 30 to Dec. 9, gave 75 percent discounts on handsets.

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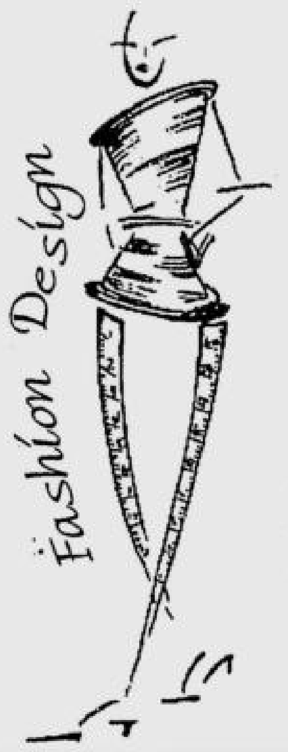

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LIFESTYLE Trend Spotting

New moon over Margie

MARGIE Moran Floirendo at her peak

By Marge Enriquez
Photos by Raymond Lauchengco

FORMER beauty queen Margie Moran-Floirendo was born to explore the possibilities of her own life and the powers within herself.

Since the past decade, she has been involved in many projects in the South. She has led, for instance, the task forces of notable nongovernment organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and Tabang Mindanao. As a worker for Habitat for Humanity in far-flung places, Margie led projects to build shelters for homeless Muslims and Christians. One of her accomplishments was raising funds to build 5,000 homes.

"Our peace efforts are community-based," Margie says. "We are doing it quietly. It takes a long process. We are putting success stories together so that other communities can follow. Hopefully, the peace talks would spread that way."

She flies between Manila, Davao and Cotabato. In the second district of Davao del Norte where her husband, Antonio Floirendo, is the representative, Margie organizes livelihood projects and a home for street children.

Producer

Even her job as television producer is connected with her civic activities. Margie established Bahaghari Productions with friends who had been involved in theater at one time in their lives. Margie herself was a dancer and had performed in musical theater.

Margie has published a book on Mindanao and appeared in a television series called "Margie on Mindanao." Exposed to the natural beauty of the South, the rich culture as well as its complexities, she was inspired to produce a documentary on how Muslims and Christians can live together in harmony. The documentary was titled "Healing the Past and Building the Future" and shown on ABS-CBN; it is an educational video for organizations involved in peace building.

Asked where she gets the funding for such projects, Margie replies, "There are protagonists who invest in that. They don't like to be named. They want peace so that business can also thrive."

With all these achievements in the media, the most logical thing for her next was to produce a movie.

Margie wanted to educate the people on the Islamic culture in Mindanao and the plight of the war refugees.

She invited director Marilou Diaz-Abaya to Mindanao to visit the evacuation centers and meet consultants for the project. Diaz-Abaya immersed herself in North Cotabato and Maguindano, listening to the stories of the locals.

Last year, when Margie approached Eugenio Lopez III, head honcho of the ABS-CBN group, to finance the production, the front pages were awash with news of kidnappings in the South and the hostilities between the government and the Muslim secessionists.

"It's not really a war between Muslims and Christian. It so happens that the government is

NEW/p.G2

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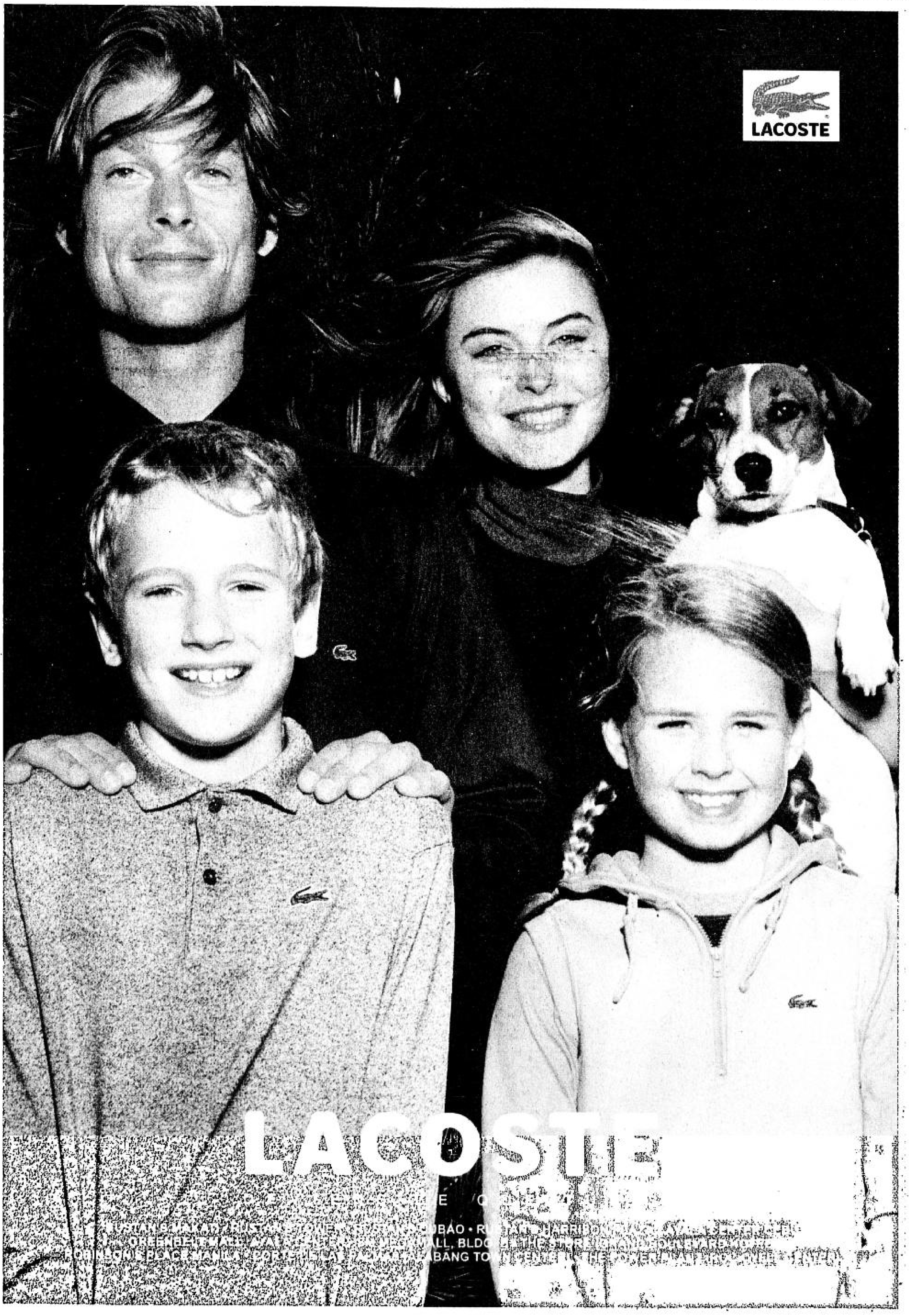

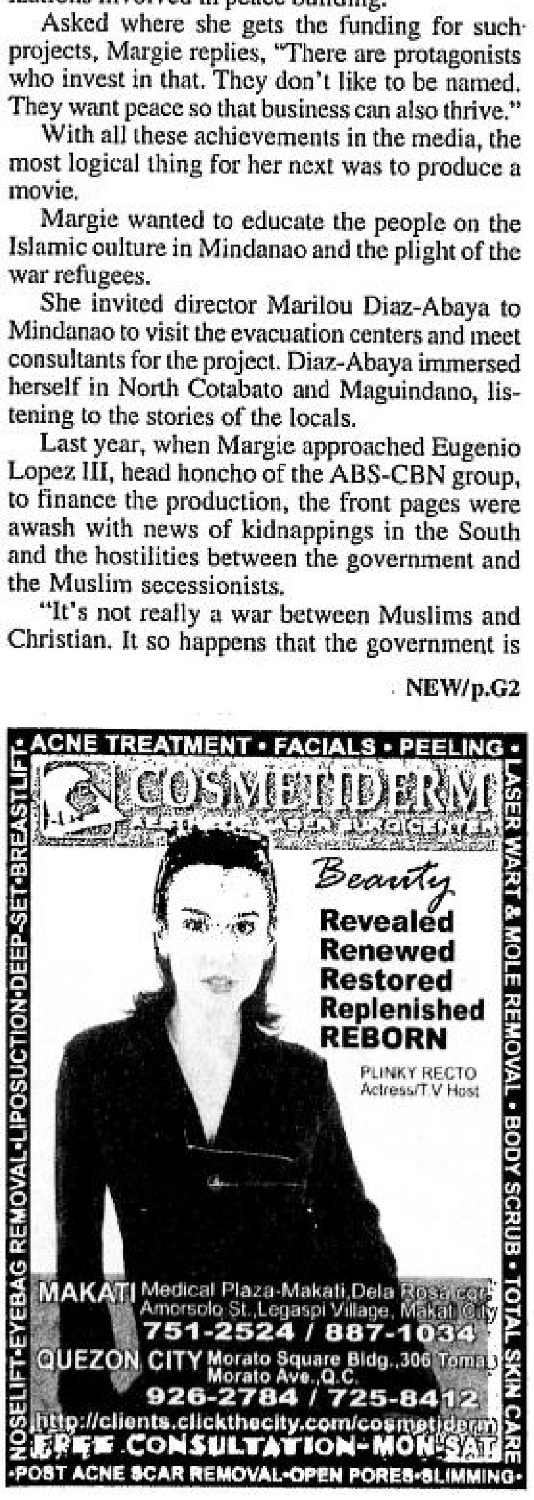
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New moon over Margie

The former
Miss Universe
is into
nongovernment
work and producing
a movie of hope
on the Mindanao crisis.
Despite the intensity of her
projects, she has never looked so young

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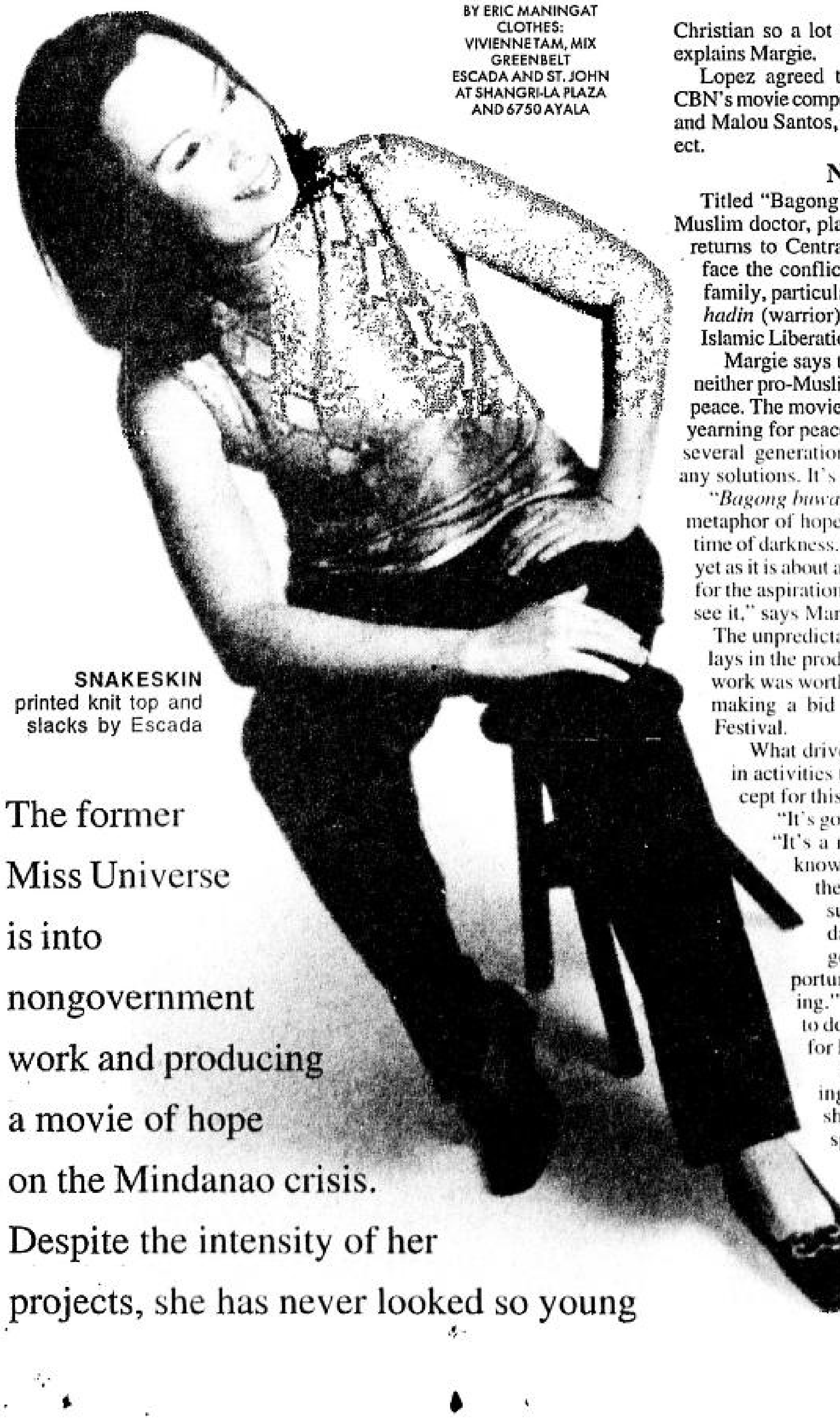


SNAKESKIN printed knit top and slacks by Escada

(From page G1)

Christian so a lot are caught in the crossfire," explains Margie.

Lopez agreed to Margie's proposal. ABS-CBN's movie company, Star Cinema, led by Charo and Malou Santos, saw the potential of the project.

New moon

Titled "Bagong Buwan," the film is about a Muslim doctor, played by Cesar Montano, who returns to Central Mindanao from Manila to face the conflict of ideologies engulfing his family, particularly his brother who is a *mujahadin* (warrior) and member of the Muslim Islamic Liberation Front.

Margie says the movie has no biases. "It's neither pro-Muslim nor pro-Christian. "It's pro-peace. The movie conveys that the civilians are yearning for peace to happen which might take several generations. The movie doesn't offer any solutions. It's a movie of hope."

"*Bagong buwan*" means "new moon." It is a metaphor of hope and a new beginning after a time of darkness. "You don't see the new moon yet as it is about a new cycle. This is an imagery for the aspiration of peace even if people can't see it," says Margie.

The unpredictable weather caused some delays in the production. Nonetheless, the hard work was worth it. This P50-million movie is making a bid for the Metro Manila Film Festival.

What drives Margie to immerse herself in activities that are mostly nonprofit (except for this movie)?

"It's good for the spirit," she answers. "It's a nice feeling when people acknowledge you for helping them in their lives. When organizers of such projects as Tabang Mindanao and Habitat asked me to get involved, I grabbed the opportunity to do service. It's satisfying." She adds that opportunities to do more service are the rewards for her efforts.

In ways that she finds meaningful, Margie loves to serve, as she is naturally sympathetic, responsible and dutiful.

Despite her active involvement in civic work and promoting arts and culture in Davao, social X-rays tend to speculate more about her relationship with Floirendo.

Margie says with grin, "We're close friends." Although she may not be active in the Congressional Spouses committee because of her projects in Cotabato, Margie says her husband has been supportive of her goals.

"I want to do well for the community at this point in my life," she says.

Looking young

Margie's work exposes her to harsh weather conditions and rough terrain. Despite the external conditions, she even looks better now at 48 than she did in her 30s.

"I don't feel my age," she says.

She feels she's enjoying her peak years. "You want to accomplish more or indulge in activities that you didn't do in your youth. Physically I have become more adventurous. I went mountain climbing and diving in my early 40s. In my late 40s, I have started mountain climbing, trekking and rappelling—all those outdoor activities. I've been environmentally conscious as well."

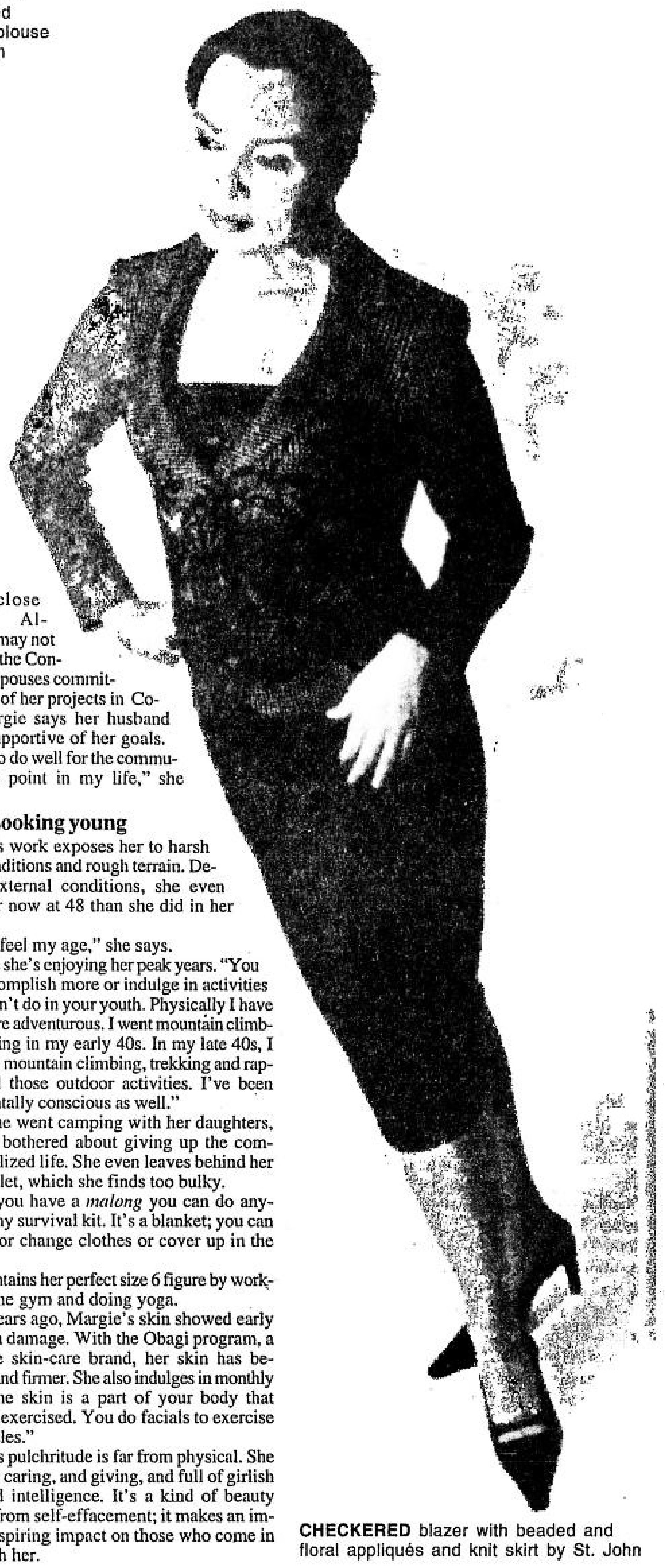
When she went camping with her daughters, she wasn't bothered about giving up the comforts of civilized life. She even leaves behind her portable toilet, which she finds too bulky.

"When you have a *malong* you can do anything. It's my survival kit. It's a blanket; you can sleep on it or change clothes or cover up in the *malong*."

She maintains her perfect size 6 figure by working out in the gym and doing yoga.

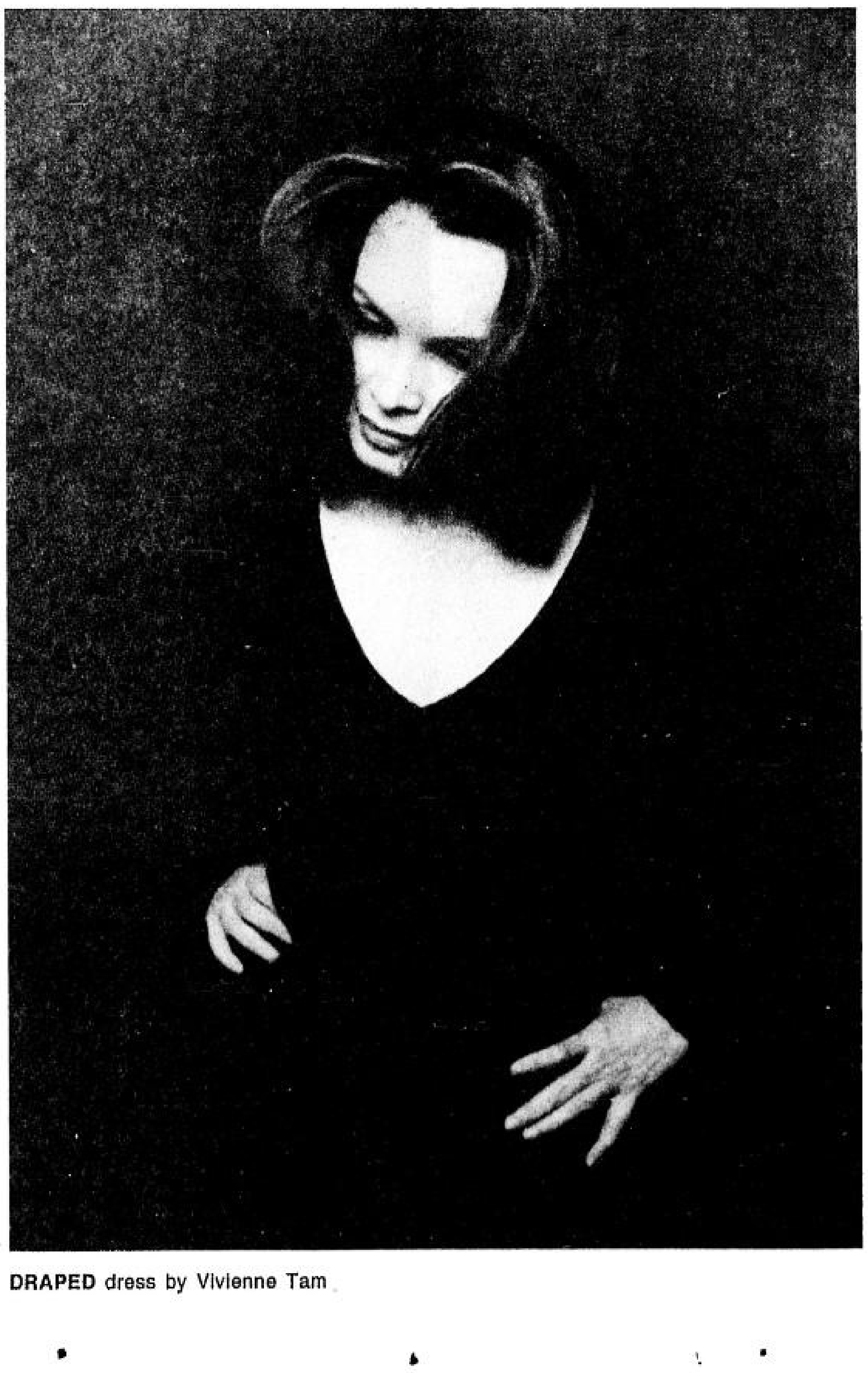
A few years ago, Margie's skin showed early signs of sun damage. With the Obagi program, a prescriptive skin-care brand, her skin has become finer and firmer. She also indulges in monthly facials. "The skin is a part of your body that doesn't get exercised. You do facials to exercise those muscles."

Margie's pulchritude is far from physical. She is endlessly caring, and giving, and full of girlish giggles and intelligence. It's a kind of beauty that stems from self-effacement; it makes an immediate, inspiring impact on those who come in contact with her.



DELICATELY embroidered scalloped blouse by St. John

CHECKERED blazer with beaded and floral appliqués and knit skirt by St. John



DRAPED dress by Vivienne Tam

Father writes down his thoughts on life

DEAR Tita Dulce,

In an earlier e-mail, I said I was thinking of sending an article that I wrote for my children sometime ago. Many months back, I showed an earlier version to a close friend. He said I should not be writing such things. I think it seemed to him that I was writing my last will, and it was a bad omen. But more than anything else, I think writing it is a great opportunity to share with my children what I think they should know and learn. I should not miss that chance. Maybe I could even expound on my thoughts a bit more.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

I also debated with myself on whether or not I should send and share them. But maybe they are worth sharing. So here is the article with a St. Benedict medallion.

ALFREDO E. BUERGO

You are a wonderful father. I have read the eight pages of your varied messages to your children Giselle, Anna and Jamil. With your messages on the varied instances of life, quoting from the Bible and expressing your heartfelt thoughts, you deserve a gold medal next Father's Day. I hope you have given each of your three children a copy because reading it and absorbing its message will help them live their lives to the fullest.

Your friend was wrong. You were not writing a last will and testament. You were giving your children many reasons for loving and respecting you and were proving to them that you are a caring father, not just somebody who gives them their daily allowance. Other fathers might even want to have copies of what you have written.

And thank you for the St. Benedict medallion. After I wrote in my column that a medal blessed by a Benedictine priest can exorcise and keep away evil spirits, many bought one from the bookstore of San Beda College.

* * *

I took a vacation in my home province three years ago, just to unwind. I was gardening when one of the neighbors saw me. He asked my relatives about me, and soon after, my auntie said someone wanted to court me.

He visited me then he told me he had been married in a civil ceremony, but it was never registered. I left the next day because I did not want to ruin my reputation and lose the respect of those in our neighborhood.

When I was back home, he called and asked if he had a chance. I dumped him. He kept calling me for three years, but now he is in Chicago. I always tell him I don't want to hurt anybody, especially his ex-wife. However, I really like him because he is responsible, with no vices. Actually, it was his wife who left to live with another man.

Should I entertain him? Is it okay to ask him to give me proof that his marriage was null and void?

BLESILA

If there is no record of his civil wedding, he cannot give you proof. What he has to show and prove to you is the date when the civil ceremony was held, then you can have someone check at the Regional Trial Court for any record. You have to ask a lawyer about this. If it was not recorded, then he is legally free.

It is then up to you to decide whether or not you will accept him. Good luck.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

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PROMO
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2001

Win any of the following kitchen essentials
Simply through a purchase of a bottle of Sue Bee Honey!

10 CONSOLATION PRIZE
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Kitchen Showcase
1 WINNER
1 refrigerator, 1 range oven
1 microwave oven, 1 blender
1 coffeemaker

Here's how you can win one!

1. This promo is valid at any Metro Manila grocery or supermarket that produces an itemized receipt. Promo starts September 15 and ends on December 31, 2001.
2. Simply buy 1 Sue Bee Honey in the 8 oz., 12 oz., 16 oz., or 24 oz. jar/bottle or Aunt Sue Honey in the 16 oz., 32 oz., or 48 oz. jar/bottle. On a piece of paper, write your complete name, address, age, and signature and, together with the proof of purchase (receipt) itemizing your Sue Bee or Aunt Sue purchase, and drop at designated boxes located at major groceries and supermarkets. Or send your entry to:

Sue Bee Kitchen Showcase
c/o Masterminds Asia Communications
1605 Jollibee Plaza
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center,
Pasig City
1600 Metro Manila

3. The raffle will be held on January 11, 2002 at 1605 Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, 1600 Metro Manila.
4. Winners will be drawn at the raffle in the presence of a BFAD representative for the following corresponding prizes:
   - Consolation Prize : 10 winners get 1 glass turbo blender each
   - THIRD PRIZE : 5 winners get 1 microwave oven each
   - SECOND PRIZE : 3 winners get 1 range oven each
   - GRAND PRIZE : 1 winner get a Kitchen Showcase (including 1 refrigerator, 1 range oven, 1 microwave oven, 1 blender, and 1 coffeemaker)
5. A winner's name picked more than once will qualify this same winner to the prize of higher value. Another name will be drawn for the discarded prize.
6. Winners will be notified by telegram or registered mail. Their names will also appear in a congratulatory or announcement ad in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the Philippine Star and Manila Bulletin on January 19, 2002.
7. Winners may claim their respective prizes after the presentation of an identification material (office or school ID, driver's license, birth certificate, baptismal certificate, etc.) at Masterminds Asia Communications, Pasig City (see complete address above in item number 2). Prizes not claimed within 60 days from receipt of sent telegrams or registered mails will be forfeited in favor of Teope Commercial, Philippine exclusive distributor of Sue Bee/Aunt Sue Honey, subject to the approval of the BFAD.
8. All employees of Teope Commercial (Philippine exclusive distributor of Sue Bee/Aunt Sue Honey), its suppliers, and its ad agency Masterminds Asia Communications, along with their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity/affinity, are disqualified from joining this promo.

* Items shown are not the actual prizes.

SueBee Honey
TEOPE COMMERCIAL
Sue Bee/Aunt

DOH BFAD Permit No.0562 Series of 2001

Have a Happening Holiday Weekend at Rustans!

December 14 - 16, 2001

Come to Santa's Corner, where kids whisper wishes in his ear and where parents find the perfect gift. For lootbags and time on Santa's lap, show receipts of at least P750.00 (single or accumulated in one day). From 4-7 p.m., on December 16 & 23 at Rustan's Makati and December 15 & 22 at Rustan's Shangri-La Plaza.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1937, Series of 2001.

Trumpets

Treat yourself to truly spirited carols, like you've never heard them before. Catch the famed Trumpets' excerpts of "Christmas in the Key of J!" On December 15, 16, 22 & 23 at the 6th floor of Rustan's Makati.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1937, Series of 2001.

★

U Unplugged is on its third weekend! Enjoy nights of open bar and acoustic music of Death By Tulip. Every Saturday, at 5:30 p.m. till December 22.*

© Mercis bv

Make your own greeting cards during Miffy's Christmas card-making contest. We supply the materials; you provide the imagination. Hosted by Miffy and friends of Teletubbies. This Saturday, December 15, at 1 p.m.*

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1937, Series of 2001.

★

Shop while your kids have fun at Rustan's Kiddie Care centers. Supervised by Sacred Heart School teachers, they'll learn as they play.**

Care for a Scavenger Hunt? Join the friends of Blues Clues and win prizes. Kids who come in blue attire are instant winners! On Sunday, December 16, at 4 p.m.*

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1937, Series of 2001.

★

Enjoy complimentary Starbucks coffee as we wrap your gifts. Every weekend until December 24.***

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.1931, Series of 2001.

★

Listen to the Franciscan Dream Chorale* and the Cantabile Musical Ensemble,** every weekend until December 23.

The holiday celebration never ends at Rustan's.

Rustan's

* In Rustan's Makati only
** In Rustan's Makati & Shangri-La Plaza
*** In Rustan's Makati, Alabang & Shangri-La Plaza

THE CURATOR: Hector Pascual

A DRESS with the Dior label acquired from an auction waits for its turn in the restoration department: YSL designed this for Christian Dior in 1960 for Joan Fontaine.

HECTOR Pascual and his assistant, Romain, wear white gloves while going through illustrations of past collections.

Museum of sublime style

IN A RECENT issue of Figaro Madame, the weekly supplement of the daily Le Figaro, the recently opened Yves St. Laurent Museum was featured in the six-page spread with text written by Laurence Mouiellefarine.

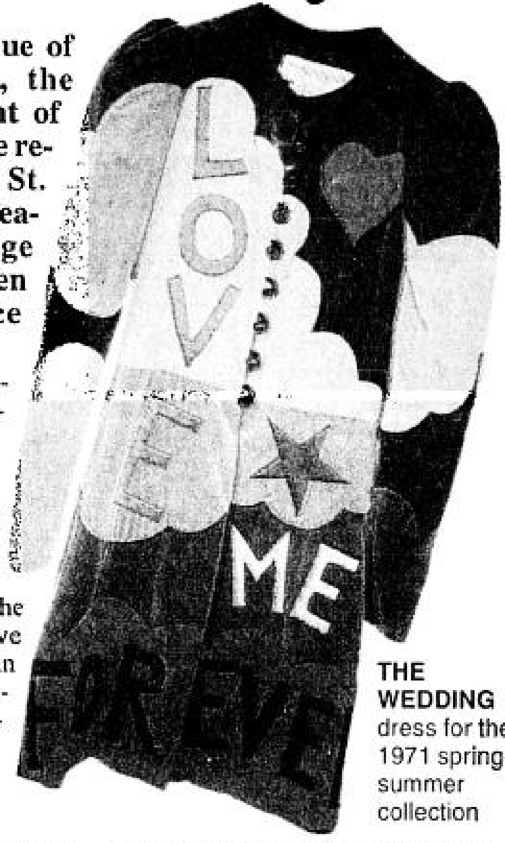
Located in the 19th arrondisement of Paris, the building was once a garment warehouse dating from the 19th century. Meticulously restored and decorated by Jean-Michel Rousseau and Vincent Vezin, who have already collaborated with the House of YSL in its Rive Gauche boutiques and took an active participation in the restoration of the Galliera Museum, the edifice exudes what the Saint Laurent client expects from a YSL product: elegance.

Housing not only dresses and gowns from past collections, the museum also contains illustrations, photos, sketches and files of YSL's work from theater to fashion to rock concerts, operas and ballets.

The museum was put up to preserve documents, papers, video and audio records vital to the life and work of YSL, considered one of the greatest fashion designers for creating nearly flawless dresses in history.

Students, designers and historians (in brief, fashion people and victims alike) may partake of the opportunity to see the museum by making an appointment when in Paris. It is located at 11, rue de Cambrai, Paris 75019, with tel. (33) (0) 153358538. Remember: strictly by appointment only.

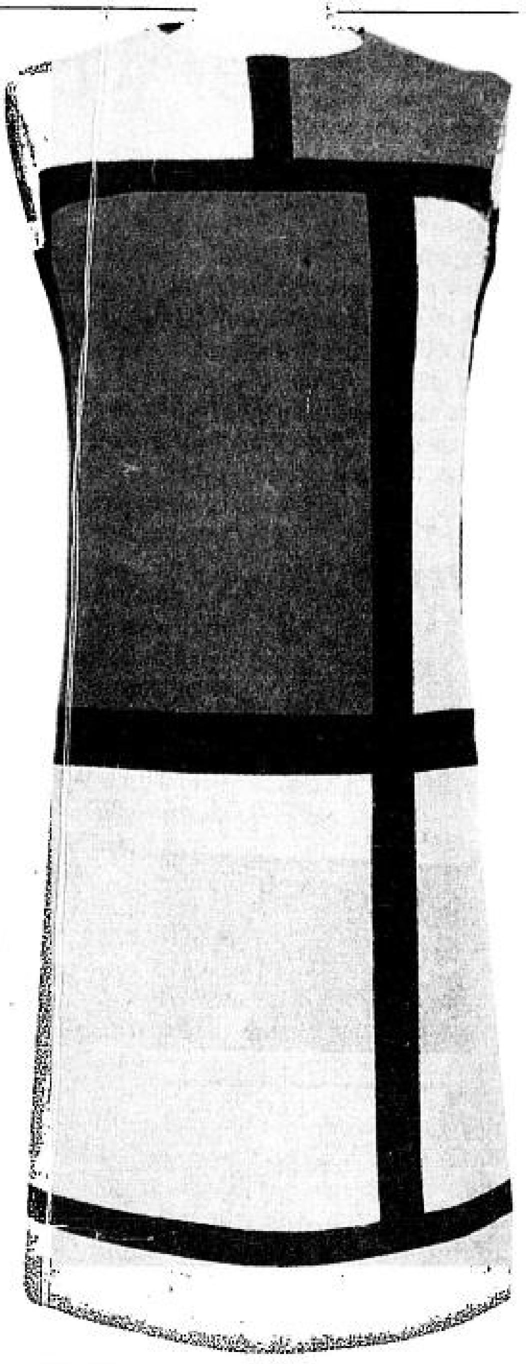
ONE of the images that hangs in the reception area: an evening gown in satin.

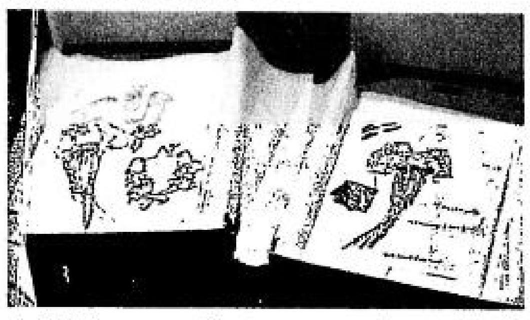


THE WEDDING dress for the 1971 spring-summer collection

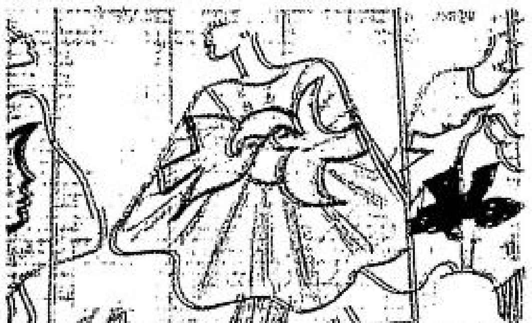
AFTER BEING extensively repaired and restored, hats and accessories are deposited in cabinets where they are protected from excessive lighting.

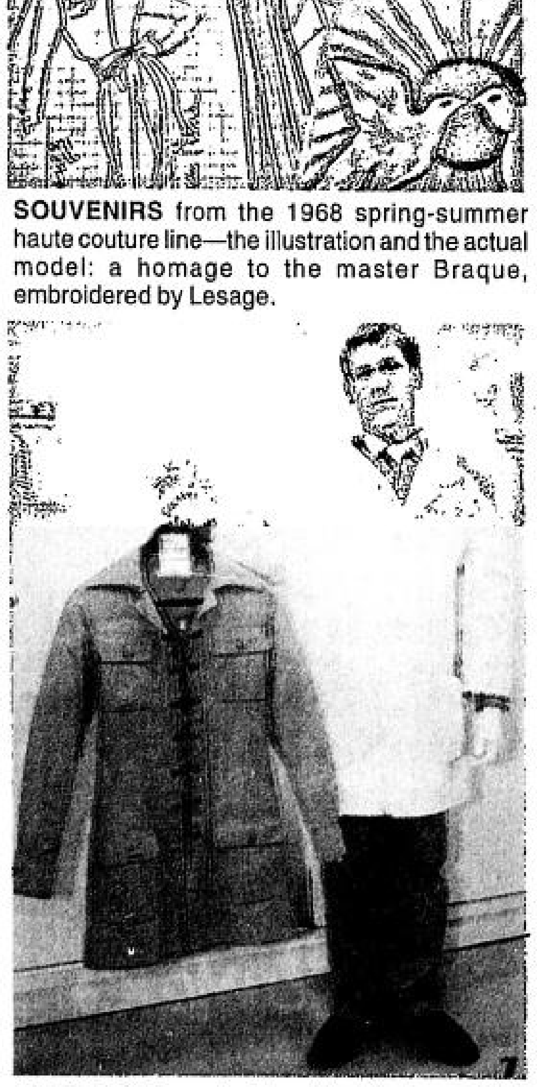
A DRESS designed in 1971 for the Surrealist-inspired collection. Donated by Marissa Berenson


ONE of his most celebrated designs—the Mondrian-inspired dress


A GEM among the treasures: the master's personal catalogue of sketches and designs he uses at the base of all collections.

AT LEAST 40 colors, a patchwork of embroidery and appliqués emerge from the stockroom.

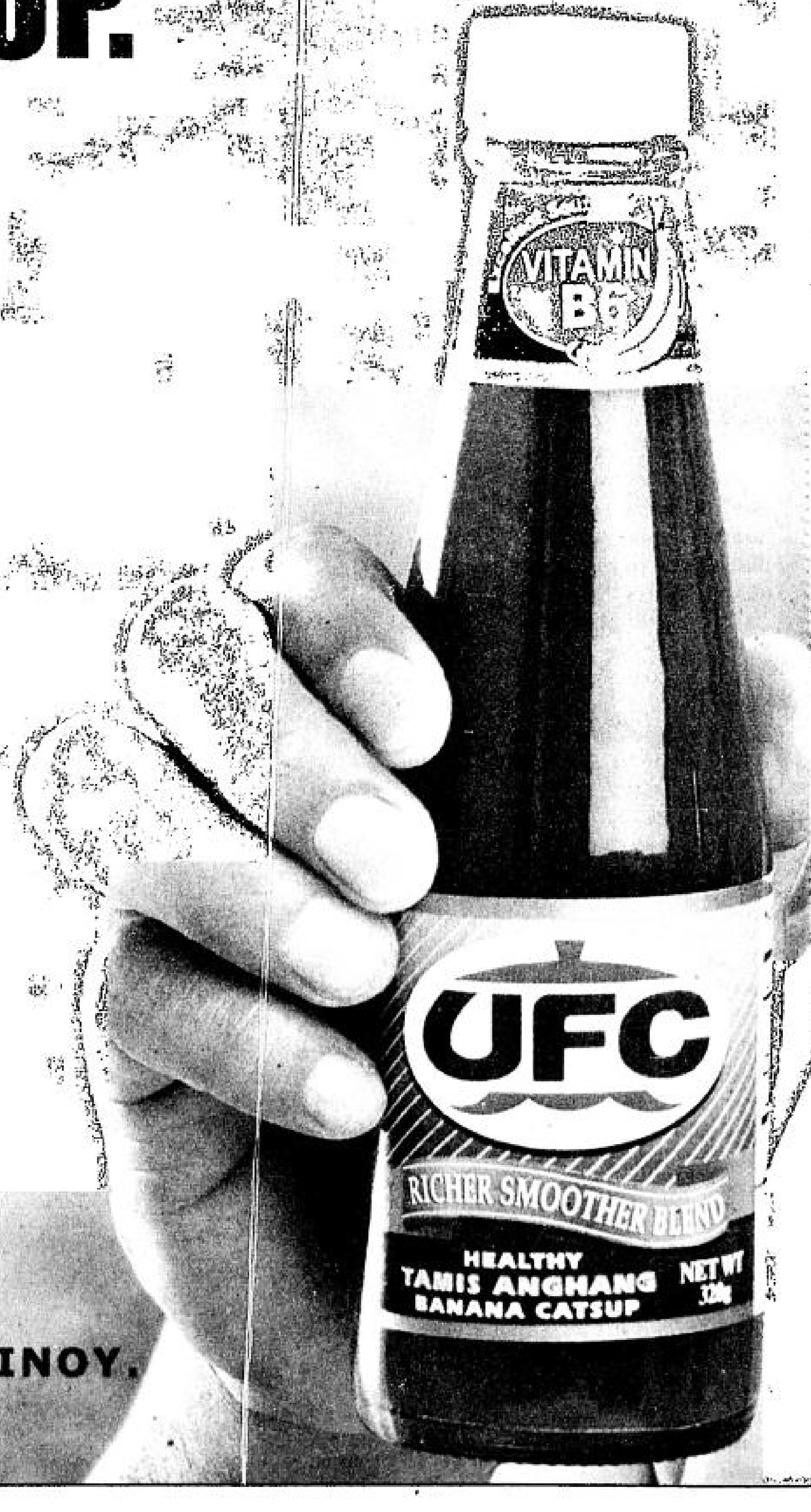

SOUVENIRS from the 1968 spring-summer haute couture line—the illustration and the actual model: a homage to the master Braque, embroidered by Lesage.


IN 1968, YSL created headlines in the world of haute couture when this Saharian bush-jacket in cotton gabardine catwalked the podium.

UFC TAMIS-ANGHANG BANANA CATSUP.

ANG TOTOONG CATSUP NG PINOY.

NO. 1 SA TAHANAN.
30 TAON NANG NASA PUSO NG PINOY.



Dare to pare down

CUSTO Barcelona, the RTW label known for daring use of colors and eclectic combination of prints and materials, moves toward a more toned-down style for Fall/Winter 2001-2002.

While prints and mixes of fabrics and textures remain the key elements of style, which sets international trends, they are now used more sparingly. The number and size of drawings, as well as the variety of fabrics used are also reduced. A more conceptual, refined and sophisticated look replaces the baroque style.

A goal of Custo Barcelona is to give personality to the masculine line. Aside from expanding the number of T-shirts and sweaters, trousers and shirts have also been added. Shirts are made of cotton. Prints match the trousers or other items in a different pattern. Dark denim trousers are given a different look with details like a small flower with sequins below the knee or pieces of other materials such as corduroy and plastic.

The traditional drawings of the house have been replaced by lettering in metallic tones, floral prints and faded abstracts or spots.

The women's collection is now more sophisticated and feminine, more refined such as easy-going pieces offering carefully elaborated details. Simple sweaters in delicate wool have a thick braid in a different tone running down its length or asymmetrical tucks, among others. Lurex shows up in striped, openwork and mixed thread pullovers. Sequins are embroidered to make an owl, and calligraphy in shiny silver, copper and steel is expanded upon. Skirts combine a plain fabric with embroidery or sequined pieces while miniskirts have pleats of contrasting colors.

Trousers are low-waisted and made of denim or velvet in bright colors, plain or with embroidery and prints.

Custo Barcelona's Fall/Winter 2001-2002 collection is now available exclusively at Wish, the lifestyle store at the Makati Shangri-La Shopping Arcade, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Promoting youth power

HANG Ten Phils., a popular apparel brand for young people, promotes youth power by shining the spotlight on young and new representative, Maria Theresa T. Defensor of the Fourth District of Quezon City.

The garment manufacturer cited Defensor's pursuit to be different in the Philippine political arena, as a young idealistic public servant. In her new role as a legislator, she projects youth power, a spirit that Hang Ten wants every young person to have.

Defensor projected her youthful cool and confidence in green tees and jeans in a recent Hang Ten pictorial at the Brickroad of the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall.

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PENELOPE Ang Te, franchisee, Robinsons Iloilo; Lyncor Inc. president Ferdie Agustin and franchisee SM Pampanga French Lejano

Elegant and classic holiday wear

THE HOTTEST upcoming brands in the market were highlighted during the Last Quarter Fashion Show held at the Robinsons Place Manila recently. Presented by Prime Diva Productions, the fashion showcase featured Bayo, Plain & Prints and Dickies Jeans.

Fresh faces modeled wearable casuals in black and white, baby blues, red khaki, navy blues and white, and pink and creme outfits that transcended the generic to individualistic style. Wraparound tops and garrison, and belts accented the outfits.

Bayo designer Yvette Lejano incorporated what's hot in the international scene and what their market in the country considers wearable. The Bayo market's age range is from 14-35.

Lejano described the Bayo collection for Christmas and the coming New Year as "simple, elegant and classic."

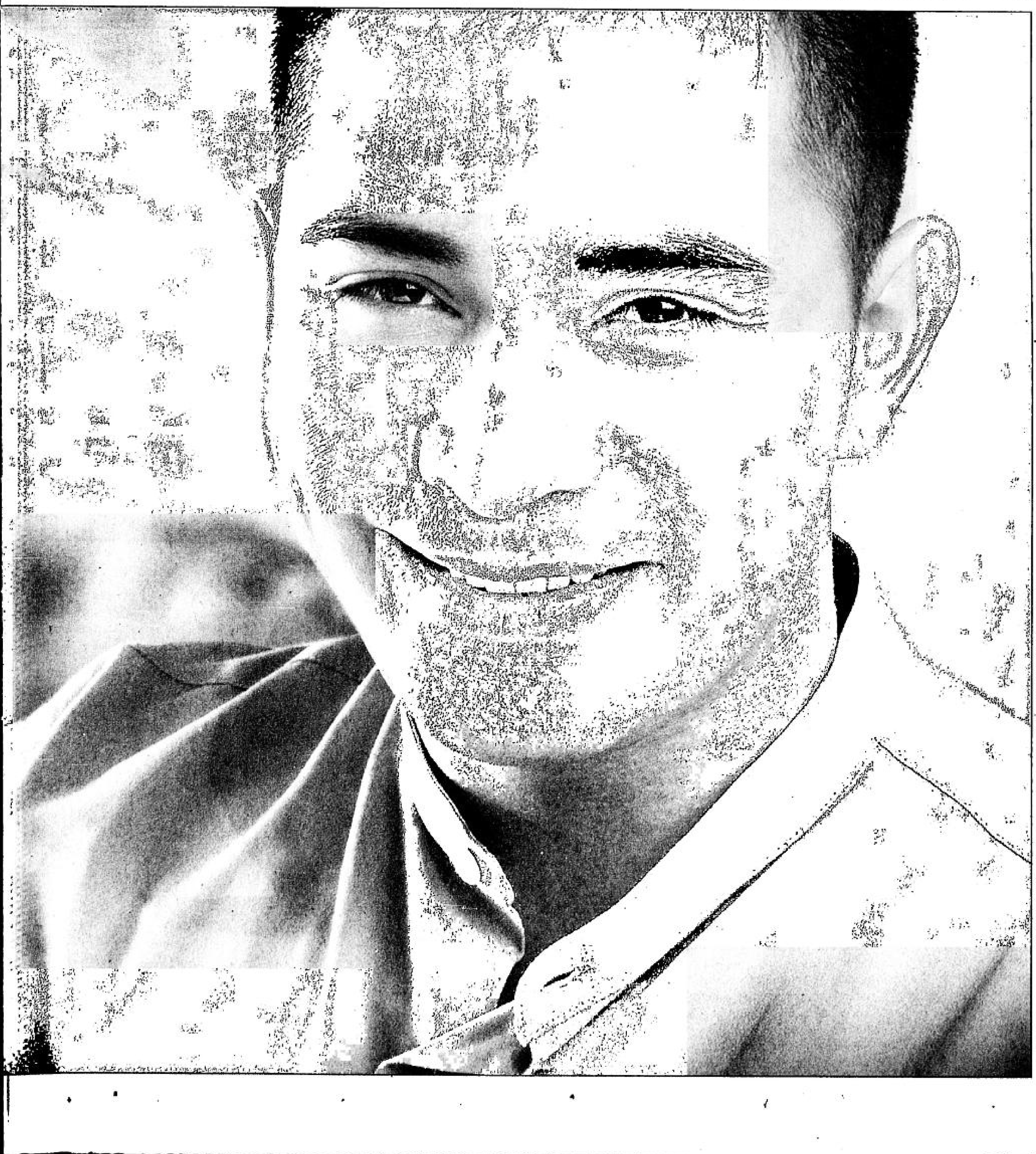
Asked why they chose Lea Salonga as their image model for the brand, Bayo GM Pinky Estrebillo says she epitomizes the timeless wearability and casual chic that Bayo clothes represent.

Plains & Prints, on the other hand, gives everyone a lot of options on colors. Their collection has classic lines with unique details—all with the good cut that provides comfort and style.

Roxanne Ang Farillas, owner of Plains & Prints, says for this season, colors should go beyond the traditional red and green. Plains & Prints presented several designs for the coming holidays that are available in bright red, coral, fresh mint and orange. Incorporating the latest stretch and Lycra fabrics in their design also gives a distinctive freshness to their collection.

Although the brand is associated with the young market, Farillas says their clientele ranges from teenagers to those in their early '40s. "What makes our designs worth buying is that the look that Plains & Prints designs are basic and simple and can be worn even two to three years from now."

Dickies Jeans, one of the more popular brands in the US endorsed by high-profile celebrities like Madonna, sponsored the opening day concert of True Faith for the three-day fashion showcases.



Mother in bloom

'TIS the season for afternoon teas, dinners, parties and endless shopping sprees. You say you're pregnant and it shows? Congratulations! You have one more reason to celebrate this holiday season.

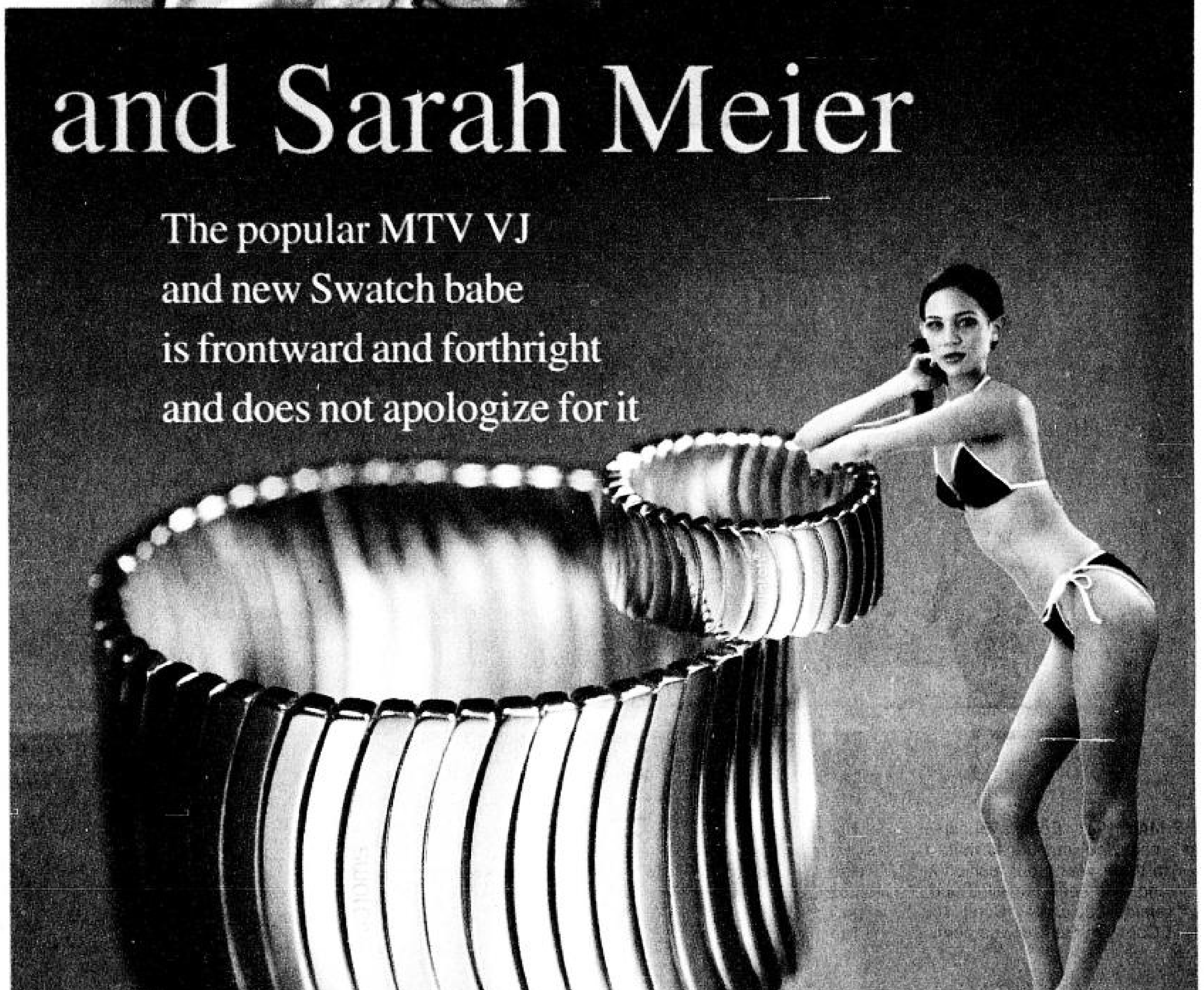
Stretch out the limits of style as Gingersnaps Maternity gives you the lowdown on the latest in maternity fashion this holiday season. From casual classics to evening hits and everything in between that screams, "I am proud to be pregnant." Take the cue from two-time celebrity mom Christine Jacob-Sandejas as she shows what preggy chic is all about.

Celebrate motherhood with Gingersnaps Maternity at Gingersnaps, 2/L Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center.

THE KNITS. Radiant-looking Christine Jacobs-Sandejas in a black knit cardigan draped over a black sleeveless knit.

Spunk, style, sting and Sarah Meier

SWATCH babe Sarah Meier wears a sunny linen blend shirt by Sotto with the Prismatic bracelets composed of silicone cubes combined with stainless steel and nylon superimposed on her hair. She is accessorized with earrings and a necklace made from translucent silicone balls.



COVERED by a tiny Swatch bikini, Sarah leans on this Flashwave ring and bracelet, both made of polished stainless steel inserts connected by stretch flex nylon.

The popular MTV VJ and new Swatch babe is frontward and forthright and does not apologize for it

PHOTOS BY PATRICK UY
PAGEDESIGN AND DIGITAL COMPOSITION
BY **LYNETT VILLARIBA**

MODEL: **SARAH MEIER OF CAL CARRIE**
CLOTHES MADE FOR INQUIRER: **INNO SOTTO**
FOOTWEAR: **JANYLIN**
MAKEUP BY **MARIZ DE LOS REYES FOR LANCÔME**
HAIR BY **ROLLIE EVANGELISTA AND IMELDA MIRAM OF HAIRBYTES**

PEDIGREED girls are out. Street-smart kids are in.

If you look at the social barometer, young people are identifying with celebrities who are just like them. That's why MTV VJ Sarah Meier shines with stellar blaze. As the new Swatch babe, Sarah represents the new generation of idols that are unique, fiercely independent-minded and look shabby-chic. She has spunk and is not afraid to show she's human—which is why kids love her.

So does the camera. Sarah has graced local and foreign magazine covers. She is sought in every major fashion show in Manila.

She's arguably the most popular MTV VJ because of her larger-than-life charm. While her colleagues try to look cute or proper, Sarah is spunky and likes to defy conventions.

Unafraid to reveal her vulnerabilities, she is not even afraid to commit bloopers in front of the camera or to distort her face.

"Sarah is natural. What you see is what you get. She doesn't care about putting up an image," says her mother Elektrika (née Josephine Go) who was a top model in the '70s.

Not obsessed

That's why people can identify with Sarah. She's not obsessed with being perfect. Before her monthly period, zits appear, which are easily erased by makeup artists. Although she's 5'11" with long, coltish legs, Sarah's waistline is far from waspish. Does she care? Nope, she's the type who is determined to do things her way.

Nonetheless, Sarah is naturally thin. "She reminds me of how thin I was when I was modeling," Elektrika says. "And, her father is also skinny. We may look fragile, but we're not."

While other youths are slaves to trends, Sarah sports her trademark jeans, sneakers and tube top. When Sarah's wearing her knee-length boots, Elektrika says her daughter must be in a good mood.

Asked if Sarah is one of the highest paid models in the Philippines, Elektrika replies tactfully, "I don't want to confirm that." She is more concerned that her 20-year-old daughter saves money for her college studies.

Sarah's Swiss father, Antoine, instills in her monetary discipline. "His advice to her is: Collect the money, put it in your bank and let it earn interest," says Elektrika.

(Elektrika also sets the record straight about her marriage. "We still live under the same roof. He filed for an annulment but withdrew it. He doesn't want to see me single again," she says.)

Privacy

Although Sarah has turned her world into an adoring enclave, she is still humble and levelheaded. One of the wages of celebrityhood is loss of privacy, of people prying into her personal affairs. Asked about her romance with Borgy Manotoc, her standard reply: "We're the best of friends."

Manotoc is studying in the US. They communicate through e-mail or burn the telephone lines. The mother doesn't object for as long as Sarah pays the bills.

However, when there's too much interference into the affairs of the heart, Sarah withdraws from the world. This is a paradox for someone with a reputation for being a pleasure-loving party girl.

In interviews, people who know Elektrika say Sarah has inherited her mother's boldness and mettle. They share the same interests, including music. Sarah and her mother sometimes do a duet rendering songs from the GenX era.

"Sarah is more accommodating than I am," Elektrika says. "She always thinks of the family and plays second mom to her brother Albert."

Sarah is generous of her time and attention to a fault. When friends pour out their problems, she likes to help and feels she can control the situation. But when the situation gets out of control, she's able to pull herself out, with the help of her mother.

To Sarah, doing good is crucial to having a happy life. *Marge C. Enriquez*

STANDING tall in a crepe gypsy top beside a Color Up bangle

WEARING an all-black jersey outfit by Inno Sotto, she is encircled in a polished steel, PVD-plated bangle-bracelet

Diana, pizzazz queen

Diana Vreeland: Bazaar Years
(Including 100 audacious Why don't yous...?)
By John Esten
Universe, 2001, 79 pages

BY CHERISH GARCIA-HERNANDEZ
Contributor

THE LATE Diana Vreeland is considered by many to be one of the most influential figures ever to grace the world of fashion. She left an imprint of her unparalleled sense of style in her years as fashion editor of Harpers Bazaar and later Vogue.

REVIEW

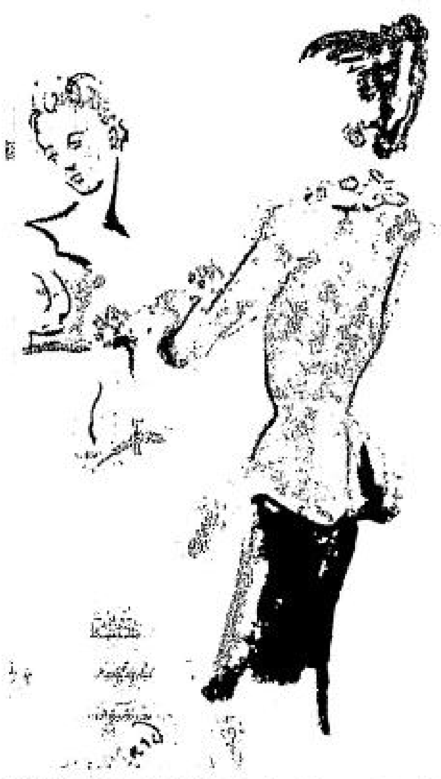
In "Diana Vreeland: Bazaar Years," John Esten gives a glimpse on what made this woman so successful as a fashion editor even if her only credentials were a great wardrobe and boundless panache. Included is a compilation of the style suggestions Vreeland offered in her column, Why Don't You?, as well as vintage photographs reproduced from the pages of Harper's Bazaar circa the Vreeland years.

In 1933, editor Carmel Snow assembled a new staff for Harper's Bazaar to breathe new life into the magazine. She tapped Hungarian photographer Martin Munkacsi, whose photographs were among the first to show fashion with movement; graphic designer Alexy Brodovitch, whose bold and arresting typography and design caught her attention; and a Franco-American heiress named Daisy Fellows who left after two years. It was her void that Diana Vreeland was asked to fill.

WHEN Wanda Delafield succumbed to the sun while posing at Shiprock, the editor took over and herself modeled a pair of cigar-brown slacks for the 1942 issue of Bazaar.

VREELAND styling a model in her own bedroom in her weekend home in New York

A collection of Diana Vreeland's Bazaar columns and pictorials shows how the doyen of style revolutionized fashion journalism



THE MAY 1941 "Editor's Guest Book" of Bazaar magazine announced that: "For the first time in three years, our fashion editor, Diana Vreeland, has been prevailed upon to resume her kaleidoscopic Why Don't You? column." Artist Christian Bérard was commissioned to make a watercolor portrait of the editor to accompany the announcement.

Reluctant

"Dee-Ann" (as she always pronounced her name) was reluctant to accept the job because, aside from never having worked a day in her life, she never got up before noon. She eventually agreed to do a small monthly column called Why Don't You?, which was basically outrageous advice on how to live a more fashionable life. This was post-depression and prewar America and, of course, suggestions like serving champagne on giant seashells instead of ice buckets garnered mixed reactions. Regardless of her outré, the column was hugely popular. People loved her out-of-this-world ideas and even if most of them were not really feasible, they were great fun to read. They were even parodied by the New Yorker at one point.

Within six months of joining the magazine, Vreeland was appointed fashion editor. Her vision was so apparent in the fashion layouts that followed. What made her so great? She did not simply report what the catwalks presented the way many editors did. In fact, she rarely went to fashion shows; she only went to those of designers whom she thought had a "look" of their own.

What she did was to create and motivate fashion by injecting what she felt was interesting. It was this originality that made Bazaar so cutting edge at the time. Among the trends she started: the thong sandal, animal prints, snoods and black ballet slippers. From the photographers she worked with, she demanded perfection and innovation. She was always looking for something she had never seen before. She was so involved in the fashion shoots that on some occasions she even posed for the magazine. Though not exceptionally beautiful, her commanding presence and chic sensibilities always transcended the physical.

Her editorial assistants would compile an array of outfits for her approval and she would transform the clothes she liked into a "look" that she believed was of the "moment." She would simply describe the effect she wanted and expected everyone, from the editorial assistants to the photographers, to remember and picture this for the shoot.

Innovative

The innovative way in which she expressed herself is now legendary. When describing how she wanted her apartment to look, she said, "I want it to be a garden in hell." The result was a fire and brimstone effect like no other. And although she never came to work before noon, she would call her assistants every morning to relay her very specific ideas and directions. She had her own vocabulary, often used to describe colors, and is in fact credited for having invented the word *pizzazz* to mean flamboyance and daring. Her dazzling originality made her one of the most quoted people in the world.

"Diana Vreeland: Bazaar Years" is a precious little book to have in any collection whether or not you like the grand dame of fashion. Even if the capricious impossible suggestions are impractical and dated, they are priceless and therefore sublime to read. That's what makes them so addicting, so much so that one day the publisher himself, William Randolph Hearst, dropped Vreeland a line to let her know how much he loved her columns. And if there's one thing one can learn from reading Vreeland's thoughts, it's that true style is within. How the people who choose to express themselves and live their lives as originals rather than conformists are the true trendsetters.

Even when she was not chosen to replace Carmel Snow, Vreeland stayed on with Bazaar. This was until 1962 when she was asked to join the "other" magazine. And the rest, as they say is history.

E-mail comments to cherishgh@yahoo.com

SOON after spotting the bikini on the French Riviera in 1946, Vreeland had American sportswear designer Carolyn Schnurer copy the suit in green-and-white Mallinson rayon. Toni Fissell photographed the bikini at Montego Bay, Jamaica. The photograph, which appeared in the May 1947 issue of Bazaar, was the first picture of a bikini to be published in an American magazine.

FOR THE APRIL 1945 issue of Bazaar, Louise Dahl-Wolfe photographed Lauren Bacall wearing an "evening sweater" with elbow-length gloves. Dahl-Wolfe's assistant, Otto Fenn, painted the background for the photograph.

FOR THE MARCH 1940 issue of Bazaar, George Hoyningen-Huene photographed an evening dress of "white silk crepe, draped and cut away with consummate skill" in the fashion editor's apartment.

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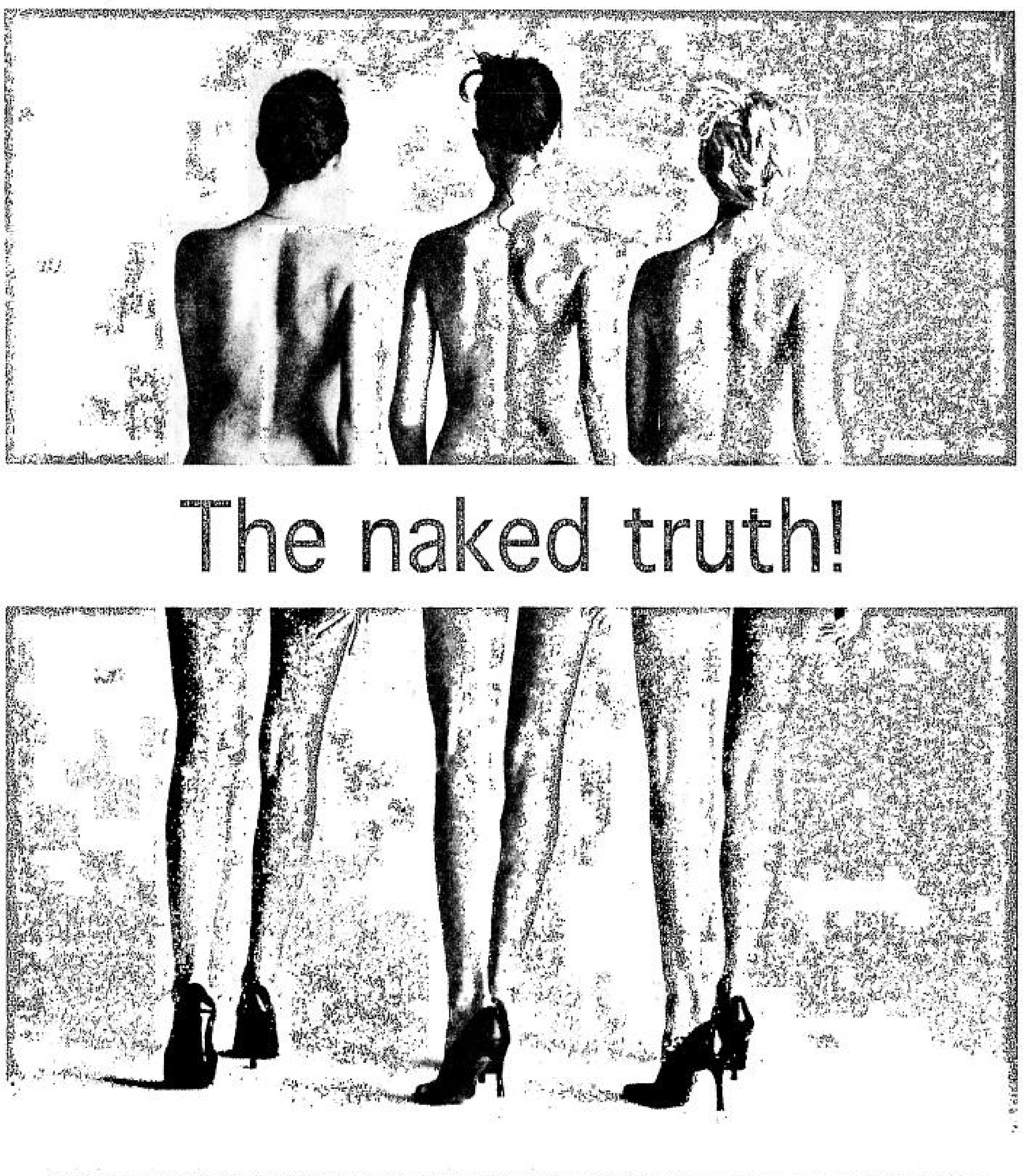
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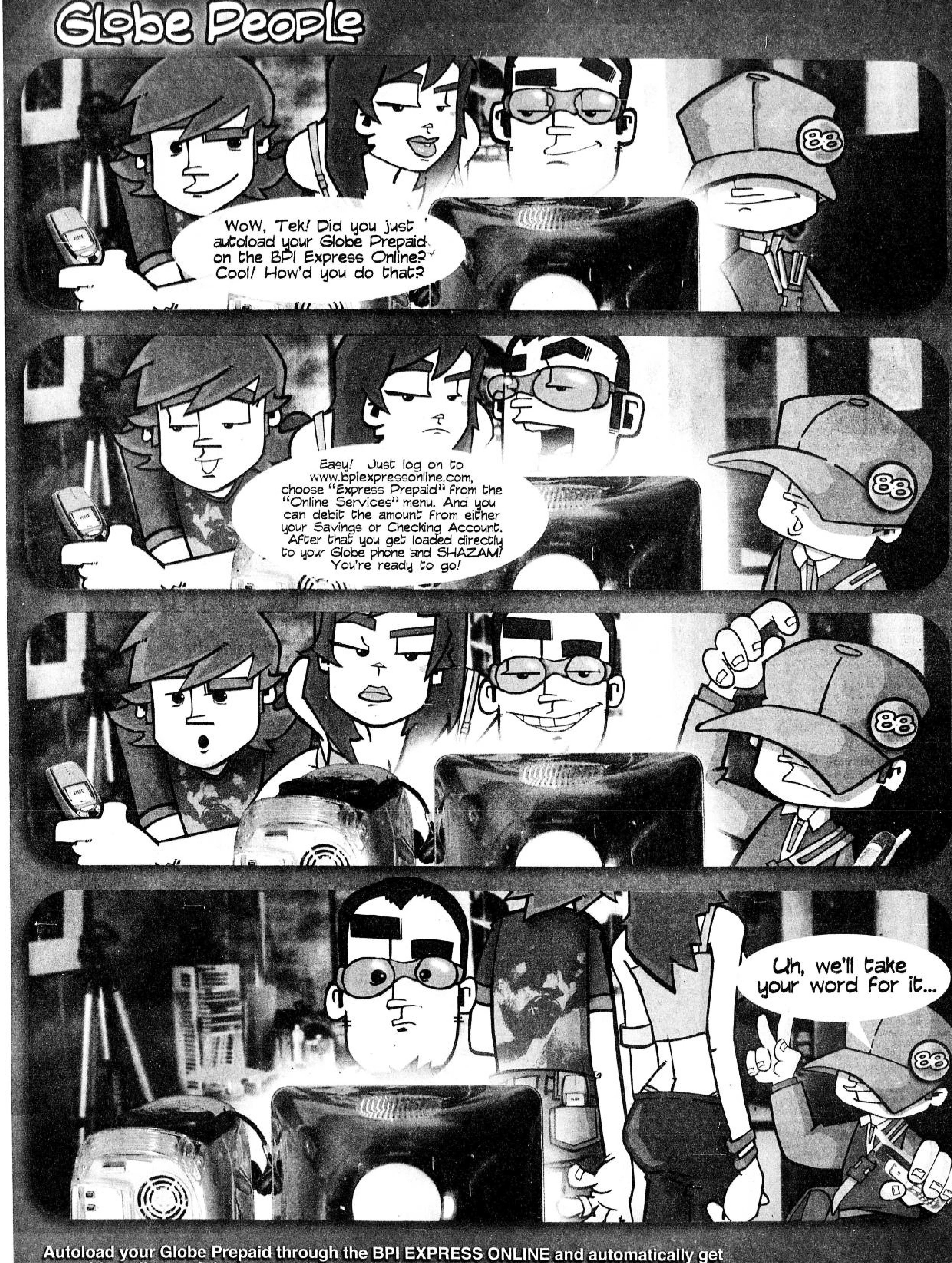
CELLASENE

Ask for Cellasene at Mercury Drug, Family Drugstore and other leading pharmacies.
For more information, please call 753 1132 or 753 3004.


Globe People
WoW, Tek! Did you just autoload your Globe Prepaid on the BPI Express Online? Cool! How'd you do that?
88
Easy! Just log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com, choose "Express Prepaid" from the "Online Services" menu. And you can debit the amount from either your Savings or Checking Account. After that you get loaded directly to your Globe phone and SHAZAM! You're ready to go!
88
88
Uh, we'll take your word for it...
88

Autoload your Globe Prepaid through the BPI EXPRESS ONLINE and automatically get prepaid credits straight to your phone. No more scratching of call cards, no more dialing up to confirm, no more waiting.

Plus from NOV. 26 - DEC. 31, 2001,
those who load via any of the BPI channels
GET 20% BONUS AIRTIME!

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LIFESTY Trend Spotting

Techno-naturals welcome summer 2002

There will be a melding of nature and technology, nature and function

GRAPHICS will be strong in 2002.

AFTER SHOWING off this year, Summer 2002 is more moderate, which is rather reassuring. But that doesn't mean Summer 2002 lacks humor and sex appeal.

Luxury is still tops, but more restrained. Gaudiness is out. It is all a matter of finish and quality. That's the trend forecast, according to the International Shoe Fair held in Paris.

The great inspiration for the season is nature, now an ally rather than an opponent of technology. Technical prowess is no longer frightening. Natural and functional aspects are at last apace.

Yet, when the constraints and competitiveness of contemporary life get to be too much, fantasy is still a way escaping to a little corner of paradise. The need to stand out from the crowd is no longer taboo.

There is a lasting craze for cultural mixes, and the revival of interest in the primitive arts, craftsmanship and tradition also reveals the need for roots.

Strong but subtle

Color is still strong but plays in a subtler register.

Neutrals and whites take a slight tinge of color. The traditional leather colors are still popular. Cosmetics have influenced color, with very feminine tones and powdery, pearly, subtly iridescent effects.

There is a graphic inspiration or a revamped couture spirit, with black and white dominant of course, but also with hues of beige, brown, sky blue, navy blue and red.

There are also variations on club colors for a city-sport spirit.

Blues have made a comeback, from the lightest to the darkest: bright, watery, authentic, graphic.

Don't forget the range of earthy tones and vegetal colors: creeper, clay, khaki, henna, tobacco and cocoa—to be teamed up with luminous bronze and copper.

Classics have been revived and updated for the start of the season, in chic and club versions.

The graphic spirit, which emerged in winter, continues into summer. Rhythms, lines, curves, geometrical solids, gigantic or minute perforations, cunning folds, optical illusions, kinetic effects, pop art inspiration and screen-printing are having a ball.

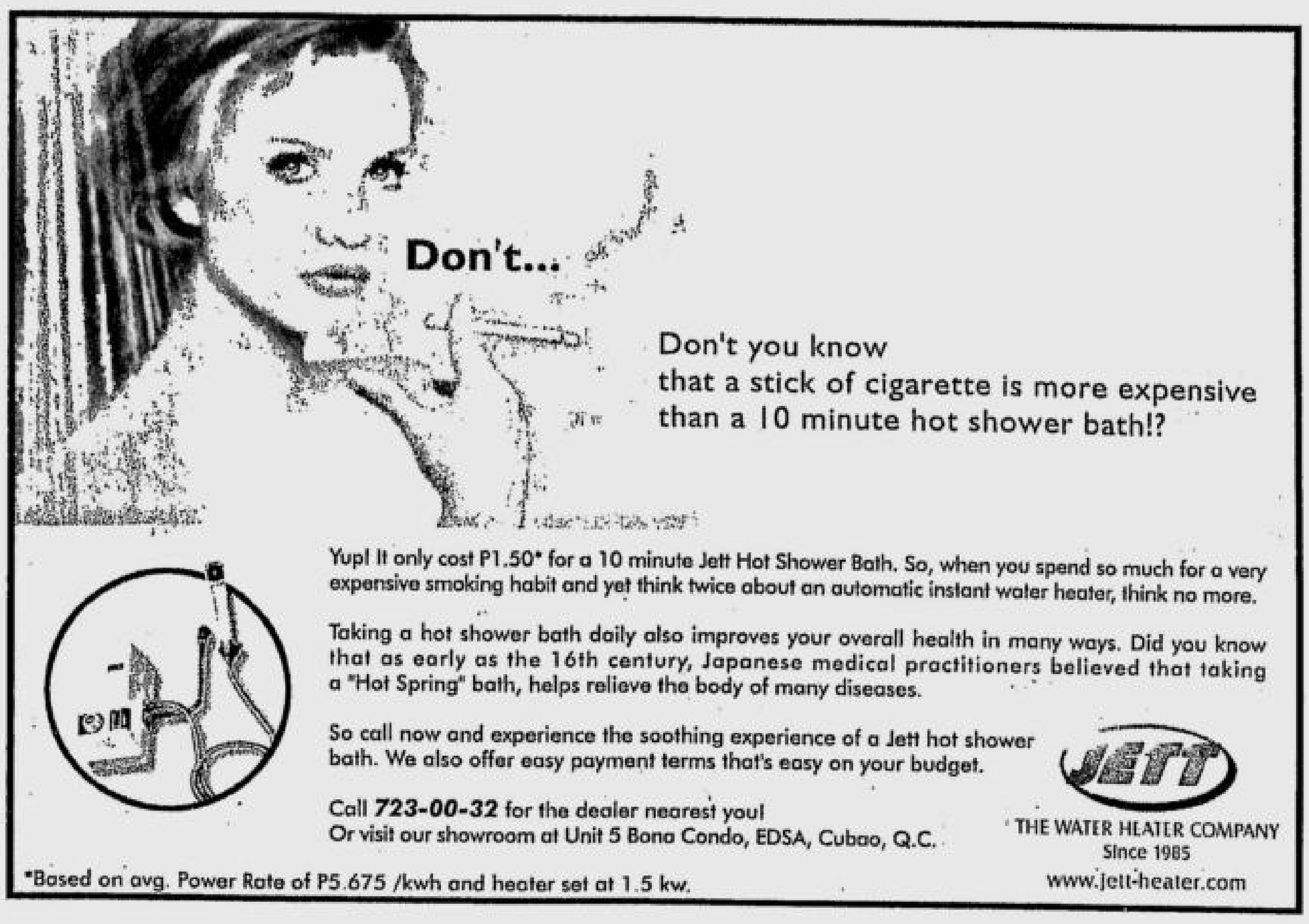
The new geometrical heels have a great impact: wedges both mini and maxi. Ballerinas, cycling shoes and two-tone slip-ons have become a chic sports style.

There are also midsummer pumps for simplicity and freshness, along with espadrilles, strappy sandals, plastic thongs and barefoot sandals in charming and cheerful colors. Fashion also draws inspiration from dance while adopting a '50s and '60s look for a subtly romantic femininity.

For a more fashion-prone mood, summer also may adopt the fun fantasy and kitsch humor of models.

TECHNO/P.H3

SLIP into fun and comfort.



Don't...

Don't you know
that a stick of cigarette is more expensive
than a 10 minute hot shower bath!?

Yup! It only cost P1.50* for a 10 minute Jett Hot Shower Bath. So, when you spend so much for a very expensive smoking habit and yet think twice about an automatic instant water heater, think no more.

Taking a hot shower bath daily also improves your overall health in many ways. Did you know that as early as the 16th century, Japanese medical practitioners believed that taking a "Hot Spring" bath, helps relieve the body of many diseases.

So call now and experience the soothing experience of a Jett hot shower bath. We also offer easy payment terms that's easy on your budget.

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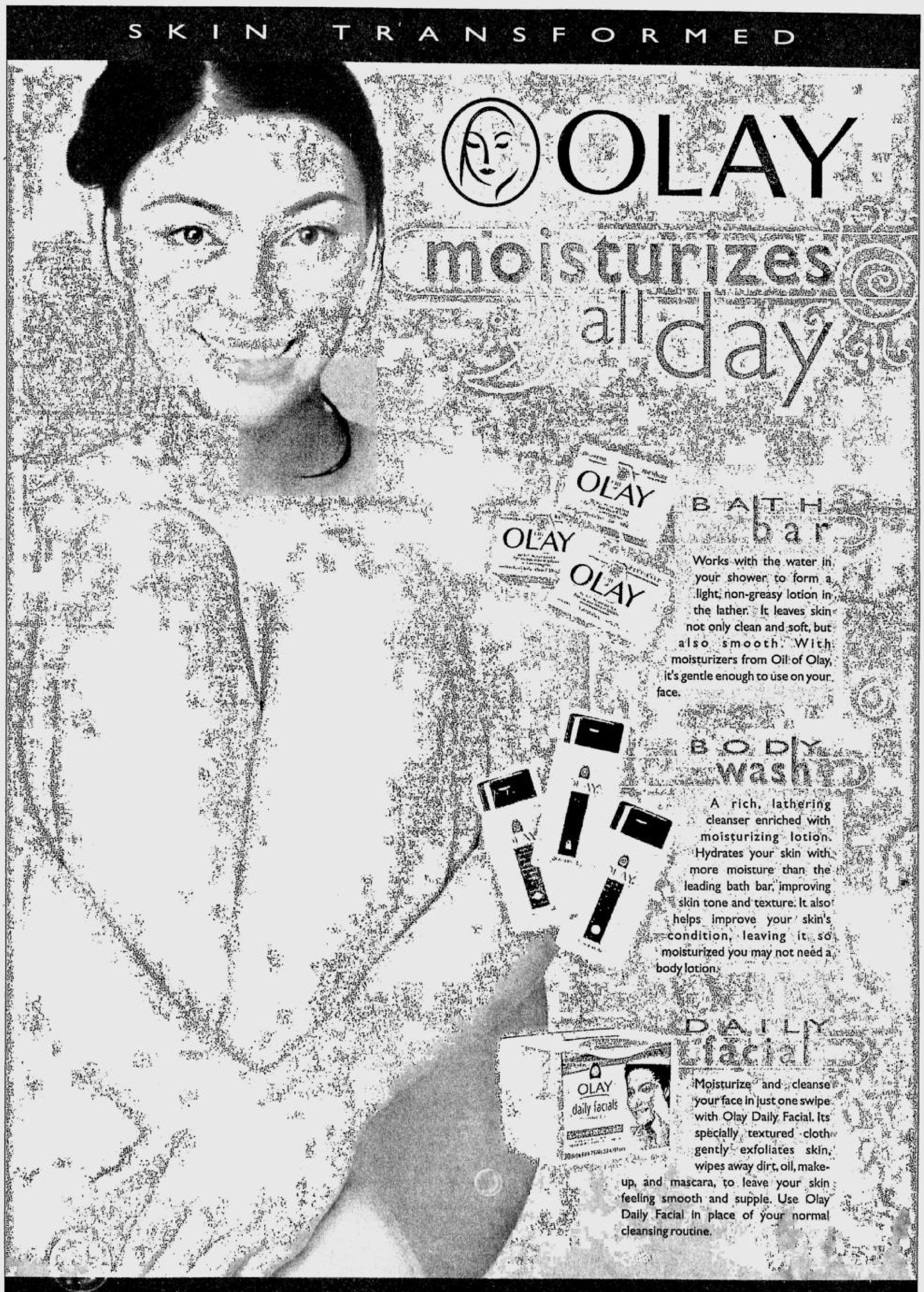

SKIN TRANSFORMED

OLAY

moisturizes all day

BATH bar

Works with the water in your shower to form a light, non-greasy lotion in the lather. It leaves skin not only clean and soft, but also smooth. With moisturizers from Oil of Olay, it's gentle enough to use on your face.

BODY wash

A rich, lathering cleanser enriched with moisturizing lotion. Hydrates your skin with more moisture than the leading bath bar, improving skin tone and texture. It also helps improve your skin's condition, leaving it so moisturized you may not need a body lotion.

DAILY facial

Moisturize and cleanse your face in just one swipe with Olay Daily Facial. Its specially textured cloth gently exfoliates skin, wipes away dirt, oil, make-up, and mascara, to leave your skin feeling smooth and supple. Use Olay Daily Facial in place of your normal cleansing routine.

A LIFETIME OF BEAUTIFUL SKIN.

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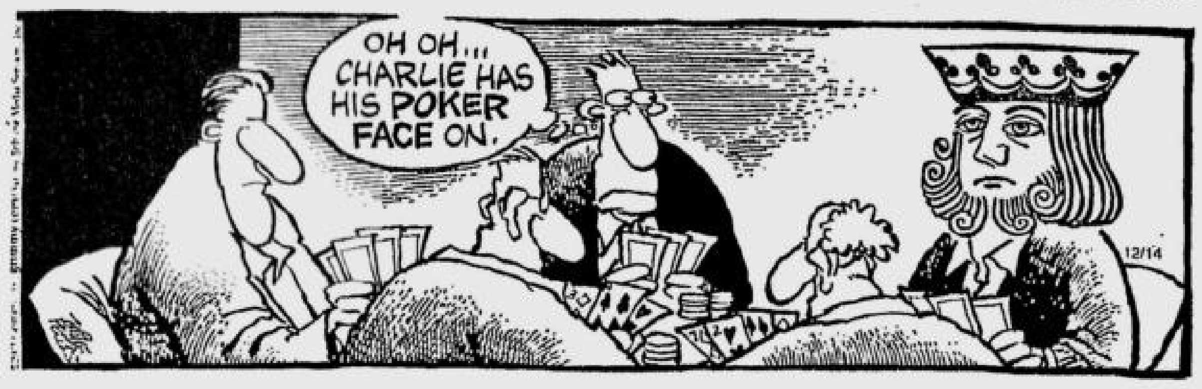
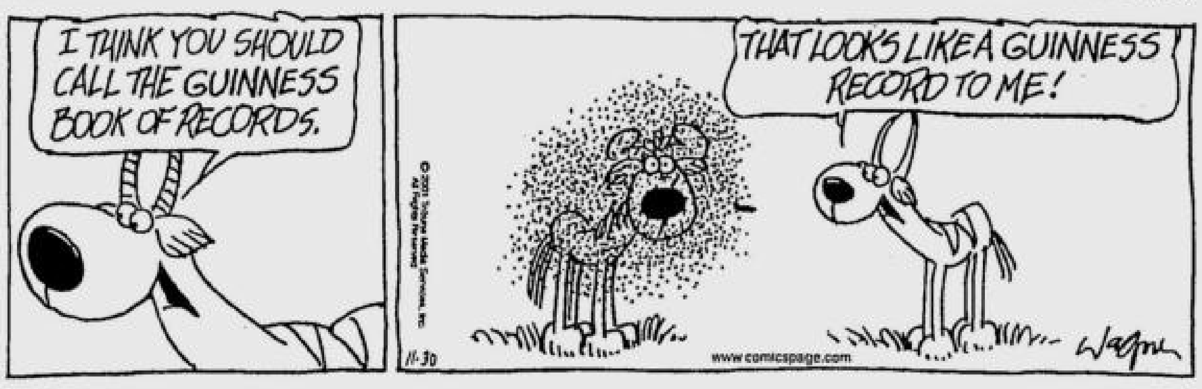
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


OH OH... CHARLIE HAS HIS POKER FACE ON.
12/14

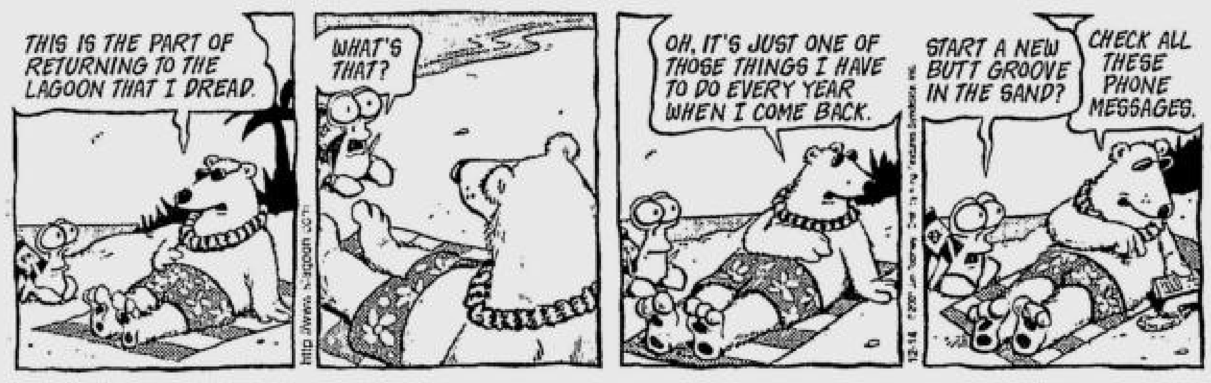
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I THINK YOU SHOULD CALL THE GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS.
THAT LOOKS LIKE A GUINNESS RECORD TO ME!
11-30
www.comicspage.com
Wagner

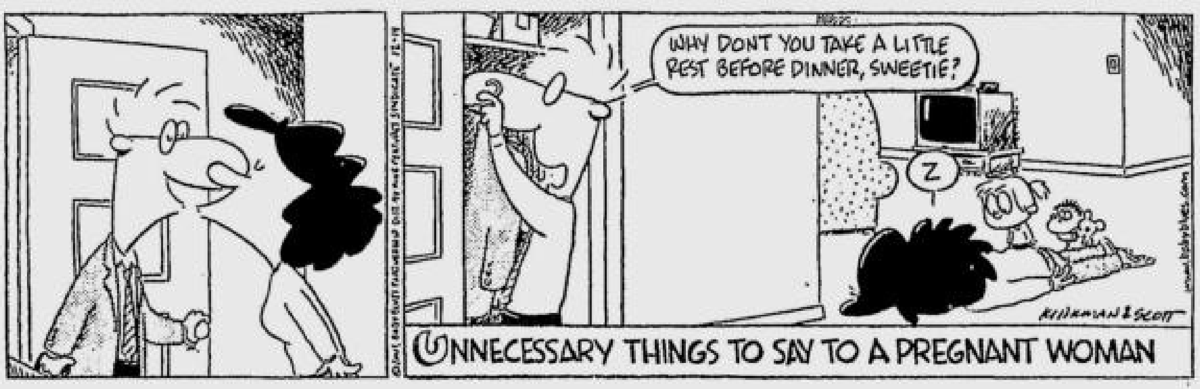
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


THIS IS THE PART OF RETURNING TO THE LAGOON THAT I DREAD.
WHAT'S THAT?
OH, IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS I HAVE TO DO EVERY YEAR WHEN I COME BACK.
START A NEW BUTT GROOVE IN THE SAND?
CHECK ALL THESE PHONE MESSAGES.
12-14

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LITTLE REST BEFORE DINNER, SWEETIE?
Z
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
UNNECESSARY THINGS TO SAY TO A PREGNANT WOMAN

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Charlie Rich, Patty Duke, Spike Jones, Lee Remick, Nostradamus (1503)
Happy Birthday: Let's get serious. This is the perfect year for you to get into self-improvement. Check out your motives, where you see yourself this time next year and what you feel your purpose in life really is. Trust in your own abilities and start developing your skills and turning your intentions into a reality. Your numbers are 2, 17, 31, 35, 38, 47

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You had better fess up and be honest. Don't tell someone you care when you don't. It's time to be honest with yourself and with others. It's better to go into the New Year with a clean slate.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't just sit there to promote your ideas and beliefs. Join groups that will allow you to have your say and take a position of leadership. You need a place to express yourself so take the initiative.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do something nice for someone you care about. An older relative would enjoy a little attention as well as a little help at this busy time of year. Your kindness will make you feel good about yourself.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Added stress may cause problems with someone you love. Don't nag, just listen and try to find a solution. Sometimes a reality check is necessary in order to turn things around.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Uncertainties at work may leave you feeling insecure. Be aware that you may have to stick up for yourself and put a little extra effort into your work.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You may want to plan a family event. This is the season to rejoice and spend time with the ones you love the most. You need to get into the spirit of things.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't let things get too hectic at home. With all the activities going on you may find yourself getting a little run down. Back up and take a breather. If you tire yourself out too early you won't be able to enjoy the best part of your day.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't believe everything you hear. You will have to dig deep to get factual information. You can expect to have equipment breakdowns causing untimely delays. Do whatever is necessary to fix any problems you face.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): If you believe that gambling will solve your financial problems you will be in even deeper trouble at the end of the day. Questionable individuals will be eager to take advantage of you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You are up for some big changes. Don't get broad-sided. Open your eyes before it's too late. You will be emotionally confused if you haven't noticed how distant someone you like has been getting.

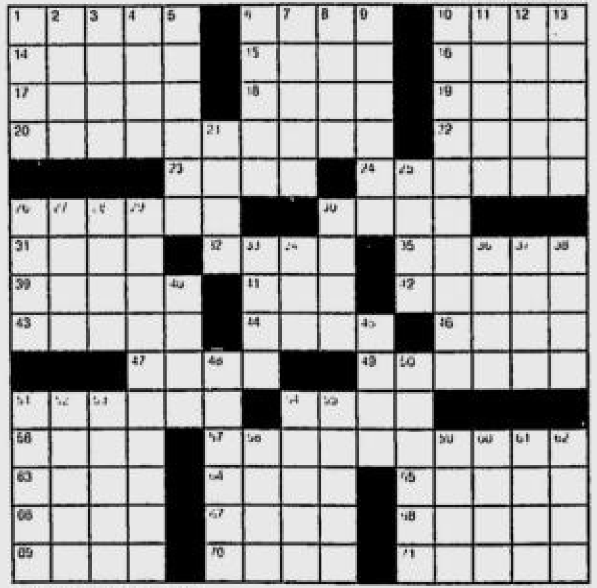
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll need to put in a little extra effort at home. Don't keep secrets from a loved one. You will find yourself in an awkward position if you have been leading a double life.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your charm will attract a lot of attention. Be careful that you don't lead somebody on if you only want to be friends. Your honesty will be admired and it might just attract someone who has been watching you from a distance.

Birthday Baby: You are forceful, hard on yourself and always striving to be better. You have plenty of talents, but choosing which one to master may be your hardest decision.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

10/30/01

ACROSS
1 Bit of a rascal
6 Velvety flora
10 Unit of electricity
14 Group of talking heads
15 Discharge
16 Roll-call call
17 Bandleader Shaw
18 Ruffle feathers
19 Shah's realm
20 Political whitewasher
22 Puerto __
23 Dolls' dates?
24 Ford of fashion
26 E or G, e.g.
30 Small rowboat
31 Honolulu's island
32 Couch
35 Corpulent
39 Neck wrap
41 Limelight hog
42 More refined
43 Luster
44 News bit
46 Emu's kin
47 Mexican menu item
49 After-market purchases
51 North African expanse
54 Pet canary's digs
56 Riyadh resident
57 Pastry flattener
63 Cultivate
64 Tug
65 "Goodnight" girl of song
66 Isolated landmass
67 Sandwich cookie
68 Atomizes
69 Capone's nemesis
70 Subtle signal sound
71 Proboscis

DOWN
1 Rejuvenation centers
2 Find fault
3 Freeze front?
4 Chow __
5 Allegiance avowal
6 Clemency
7 Skips
8 Underground missile shelter
9 Sound system
10 Hovering craft
11 Eagle's residence
12 Follow a trail
13 Mortise's partner
21 Yours and mine
25 Pressing implement
26 Defeat
27 Per unit
28 Bangkok resident
29 Lazy Susans
30 Knight's wife
33 State or river name
34 Blubber
36 Resound
37 Discerned
38 Remarkable times
40 Suspicion
45 Creche threesome
48 Drive-in employee
50 Jeans
51 Glossy fabric
52 Originate
53 Dormitories
54 Holmes hints
55 Portion out
58 Galley gear
59 __ and bear it!
60 Cozumel currency
61 Keen on
62 Home in a hemlock

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

R	I	N	K	■	R	U	B	L	E	■	L	O	L	A
A	L	I	A	■	A	N	E	A	R	■	I	V	A	N
J	O	G	I	N	P	L	A	C	E	■	F	E	T	E
A	N	E	■	A	P	E	D	■	■	S	T	R	E	W
H	A	R	R	I	E	D	■	S	H	A	W	L	■	■
■	■	■	I	L	L	■	S	T	O	N	E	A	G	E
C	H	A	D	S	■	A	L	A	N	■	I	D	Y	L
R	A	B	E	■	S	T	A	G	E	■	G	E	R	E
A	N	A	T	■	A	S	P	S	■	P	H	N	O	M
M	A	N	H	O	L	E	S	■	F	I	T	■	■	■
■	■	D	E	L	T	A	■	T	O	C	S	I	N	S
A	D	O	B	E	■	■	A	E	R	O	■	D	E	A
L	O	N	I	■	H	U	N	T	E	N	L	A	P	S
T	R	E	K	■	A	G	N	E	S	■	A	H	A	S
S	A	D	E	■	G	H	O	S	T	■	H	O	L	Y

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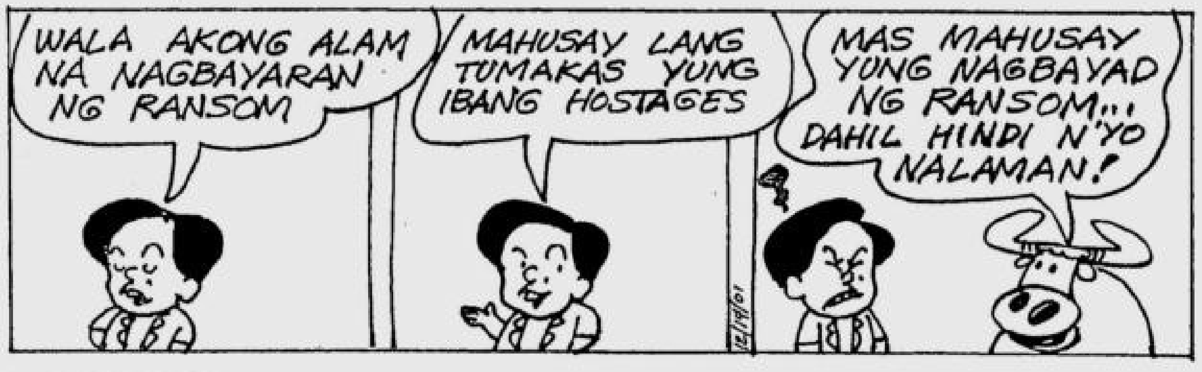
10/30/01

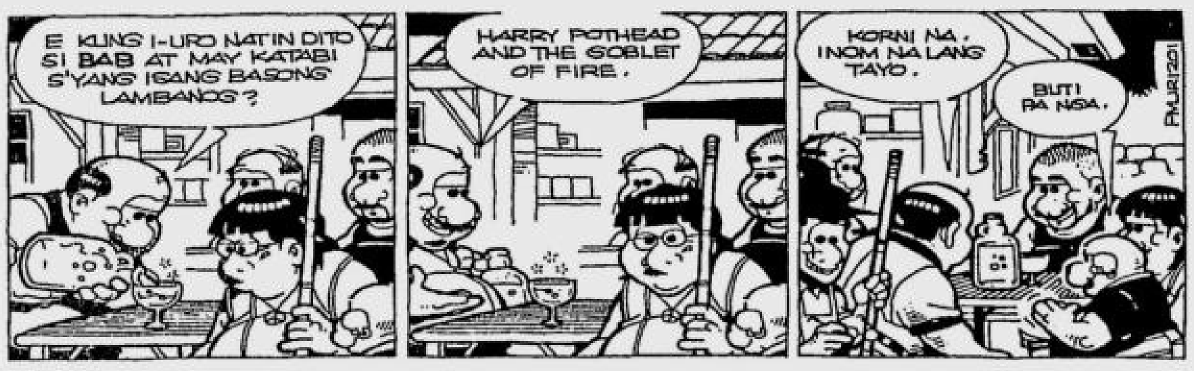
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WALA AKONG ALAM NA NAGBAYARAN NG RANSOM
MAHUSAY LANG TUMAKAS YUNG IBANG HOSTAGES
MAS MAHUSAY YUNG NAGBAYAD NG RANSOM... DAHIL HINDI N'YO NALAMAN!

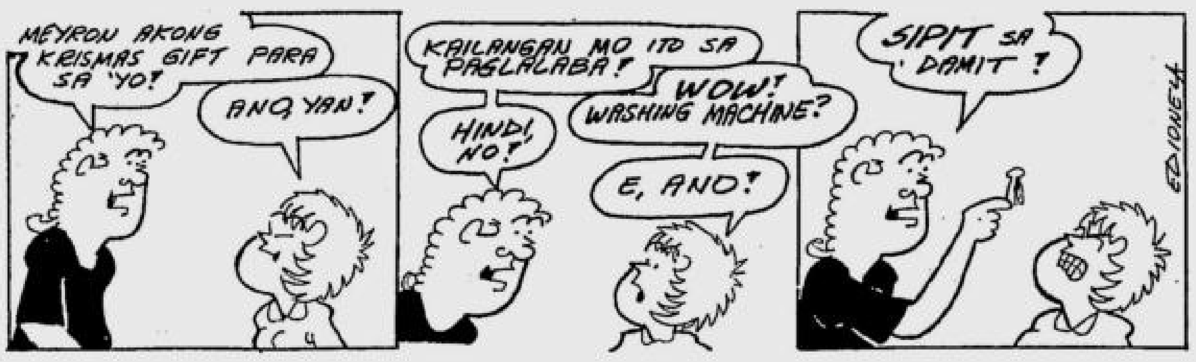
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


E KUNG I-URO NAT'IN DITO SI BAB AT MAY KATABI S'YANG ISANG BASONG LAMBANOG?
HARRY POTHEAD AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE.
KORNI NA. INOM NA LANG TAYO.
BUTI PA NGA.

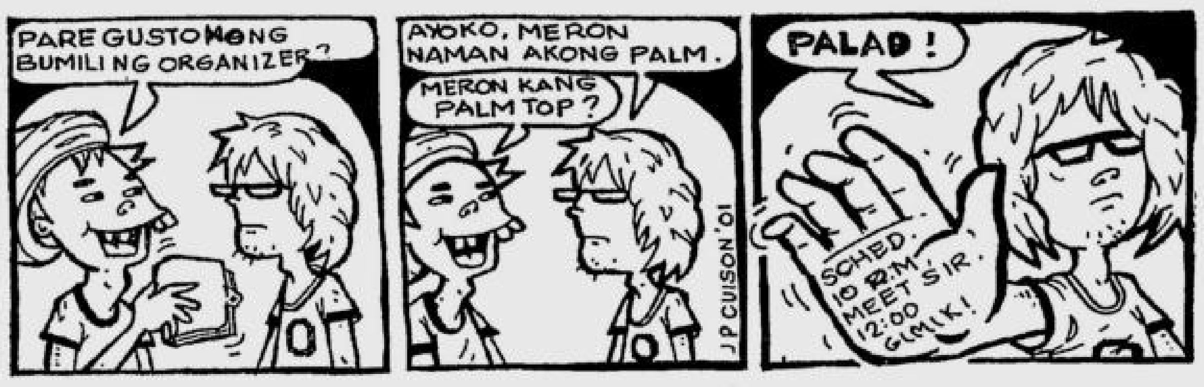
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


MEYRON AKONG KRISMAS GIFT PARA SA 'YO!
ANO YAN?
KAILANGAN MO ITO SA PAGLALABA!
HINDI, NO!
WOW! WASHING MACHINE?
E, ANO?
SIPIT SA DAMIT?
EDIONELA

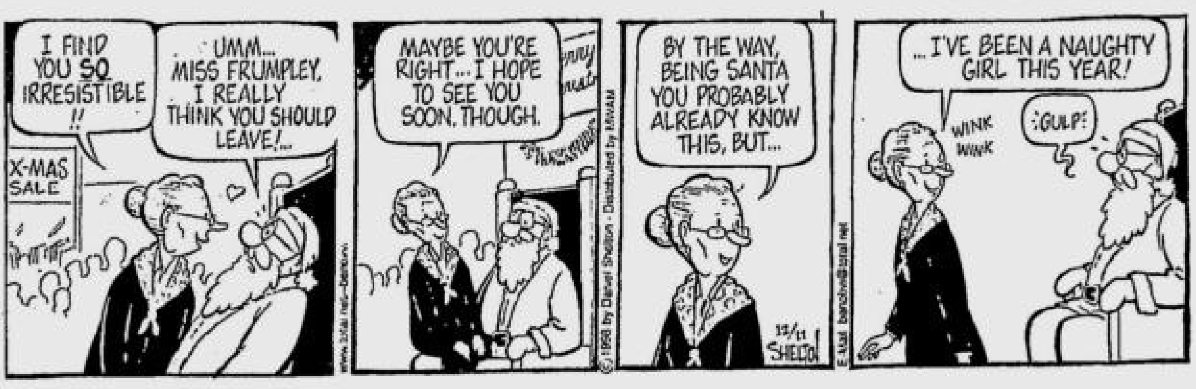
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


PARE GUSTO MONG BUMILI NG ORGANIZER?
AYOKO, MERON NAMAN AKONG PALM.
MERON KANG PALM TOP?
JP CUISON '01
PALAD!
SCHED. 10 P.M. MEET SIR 12:00 GIMIK!

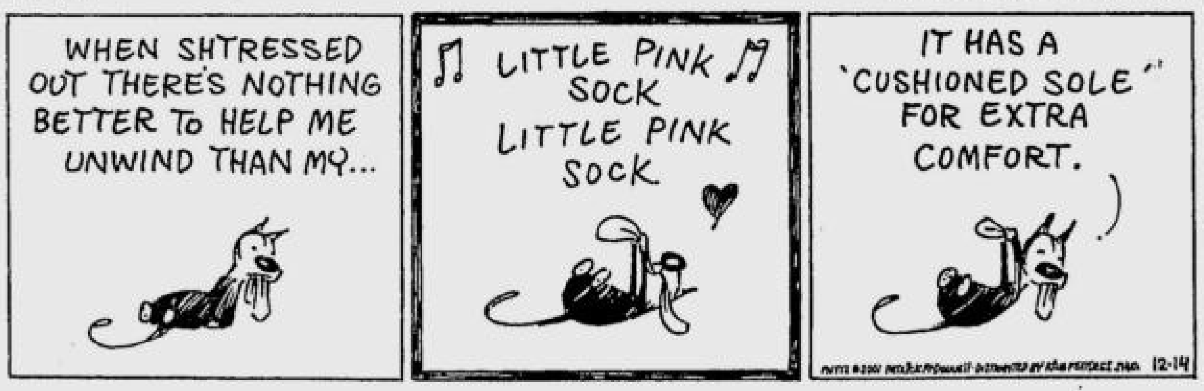
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I FIND YOU SO IRRESISTIBLE !!
UMM... MISS FRUMPLEY, I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD LEAVE!...
X-MAS SALE
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... I HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON, THOUGH.
BY THE WAY, BEING SANTA YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW THIS, BUT...
...I'VE BEEN A NAUGHTY GIRL THIS YEAR!
WINK WINK
GULP!
SHELTON

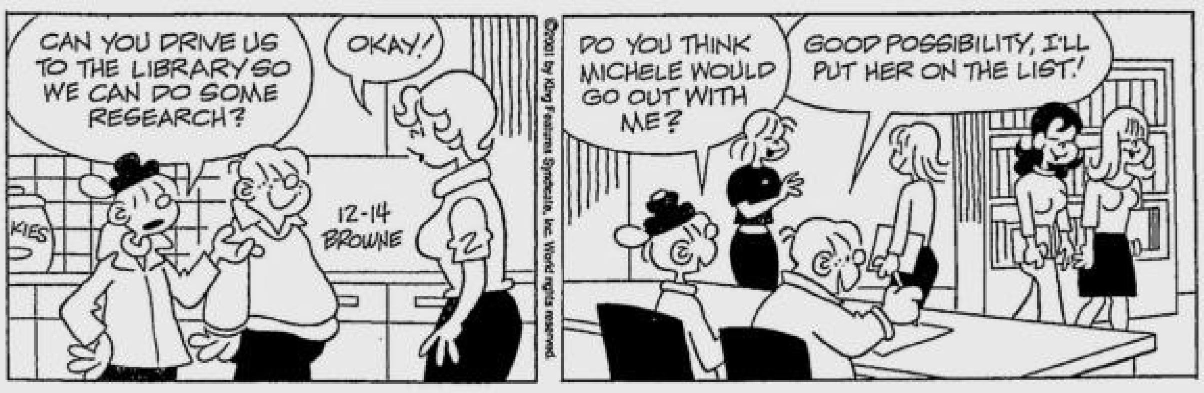
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHEN SHTRESSED OUT THERE'S NOTHING BETTER TO HELP ME UNWIND THAN MY...
♫ LITTLE PINK SOCK LITTLE PINK SOCK ♫
IT HAS A 'CUSHIONED SOLE' FOR EXTRA COMFORT.
12-14

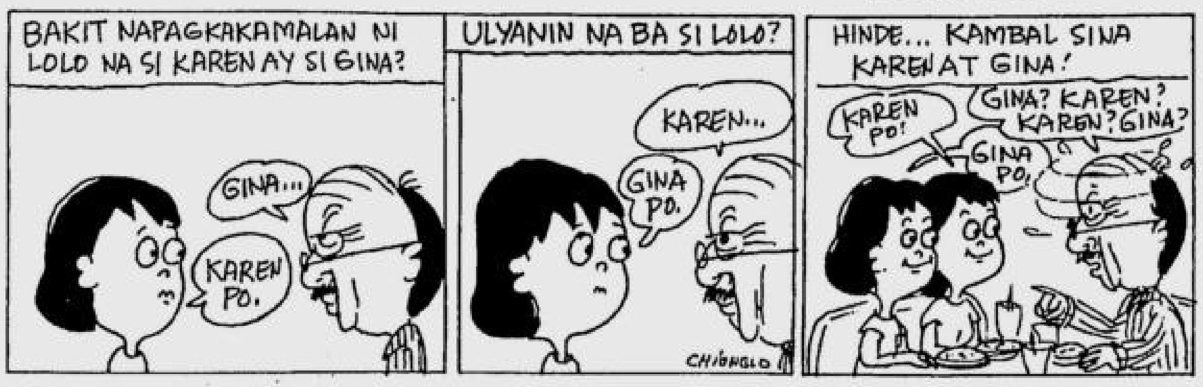
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


CAN YOU DRIVE US TO THE LIBRARY SO WE CAN DO SOME RESEARCH?
OKAY!
12-14 BROWNE
DO YOU THINK MICHELE WOULD GO OUT WITH ME?
GOOD POSSIBILITY, I'LL PUT HER ON THE LIST!

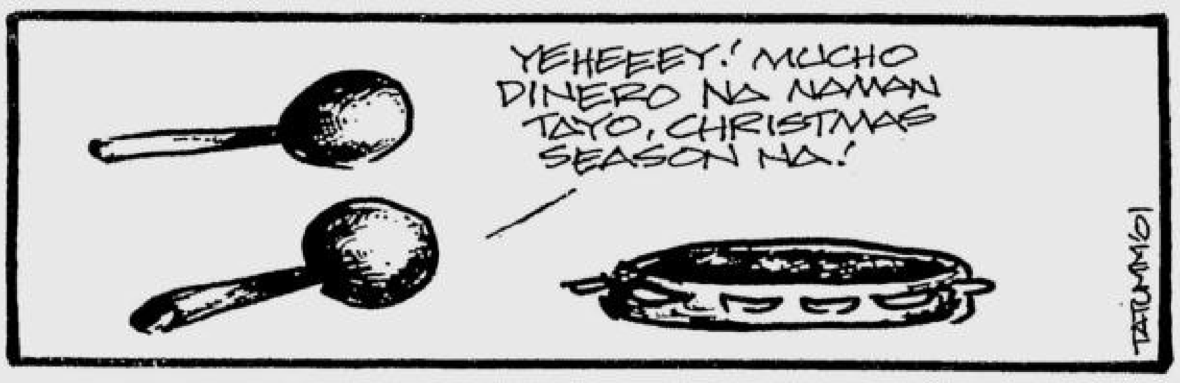
LOVEKNOTS

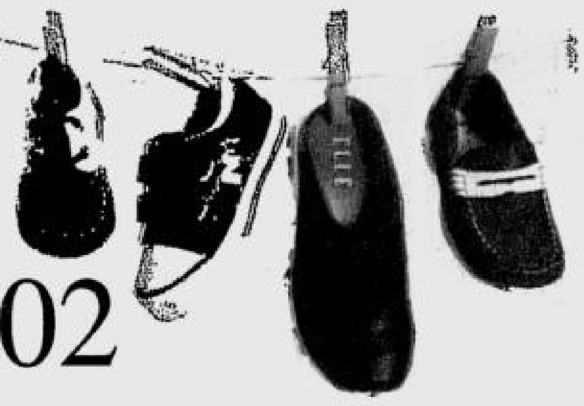
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BAKIT NAPAGKAKAMALAN NI LOLO NA SI KAREN AY SI GINA?
GINA...
KAREN PO.
ULYANIN NA BA SI LOLO?
KAREN...
GINA PO.
CHIONGLO
HINDE... KAMBAL SINA KAREN AT GINA!
KAREN PO!
GINA? KAREN? KAREN? GINA?
GINA PO.

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


YEHEEEY! MUCHO DINERO NA NAMAN TAYO, CHRISTMAS SEASON NA!
TATUM '01



GRAPHIC designs are also featured in children's footwear.

Techno-naturals welcome summer 2002

(From page H1)

Back

Safari and colonial styles are back to go with the new uniforms: desert boots, leather sandals, revamped plaits, Roman sandals, laced thongs...

Cultural mixes and ethnic influences are evident in the craftsmanship, handmade looks, primitive designs, crossbred and colored models. Moroccan slippers top the bill, giving the season's essential shape; they're even present in city styles and sophisticated eveningwear.

The dominant patterns for the season are stripes: bayadère, shirting, deck chair, sailor; and flowers: mini, maxi, graphic, wild flowers straight out of the herbarium or romantic flowers taken from furnishing prints (Liberty prints).

We should not forget extremely feminine styles and tapering toes (mainly on narrow midheight heels) and a comeback for canvas models.

Men's footwear shows the same basic trends as for women. The club effect signals a comeback for certain socially acceptable values. Classics are updated by new materials and finishes: chic grains, sport grains, laces, perforations, plaiting and modern soles.

There are graphic contrasts and a new relaxed look for city sandals and derbies or oxfords with designed profiles.

Also current is the classy seaside feeling and simple basics for a revived boat shoe spirit.

Trendy, too, is the functional, practical cross-country look for sandals, moccasins and barefoot sandals, which cleverly combine technology and natural materials.

There are ethnic or surfer-look influences on the mules, espadrilles and barefoot sandals for midsummer and the beach.

Color

Color is omnipresent, sometimes soft and subtle, sometimes very bright, and sometimes natural and vegetal.

To please a girlish taste for freshness, tenderness but also seduction, there are whites, neutrals and tinted pastels; (blue, pink and green), powdery colors, pearly and iridescent effects, as well as energetic greens and yellows in very feminine sandals, ballerinas and Mary Janes.

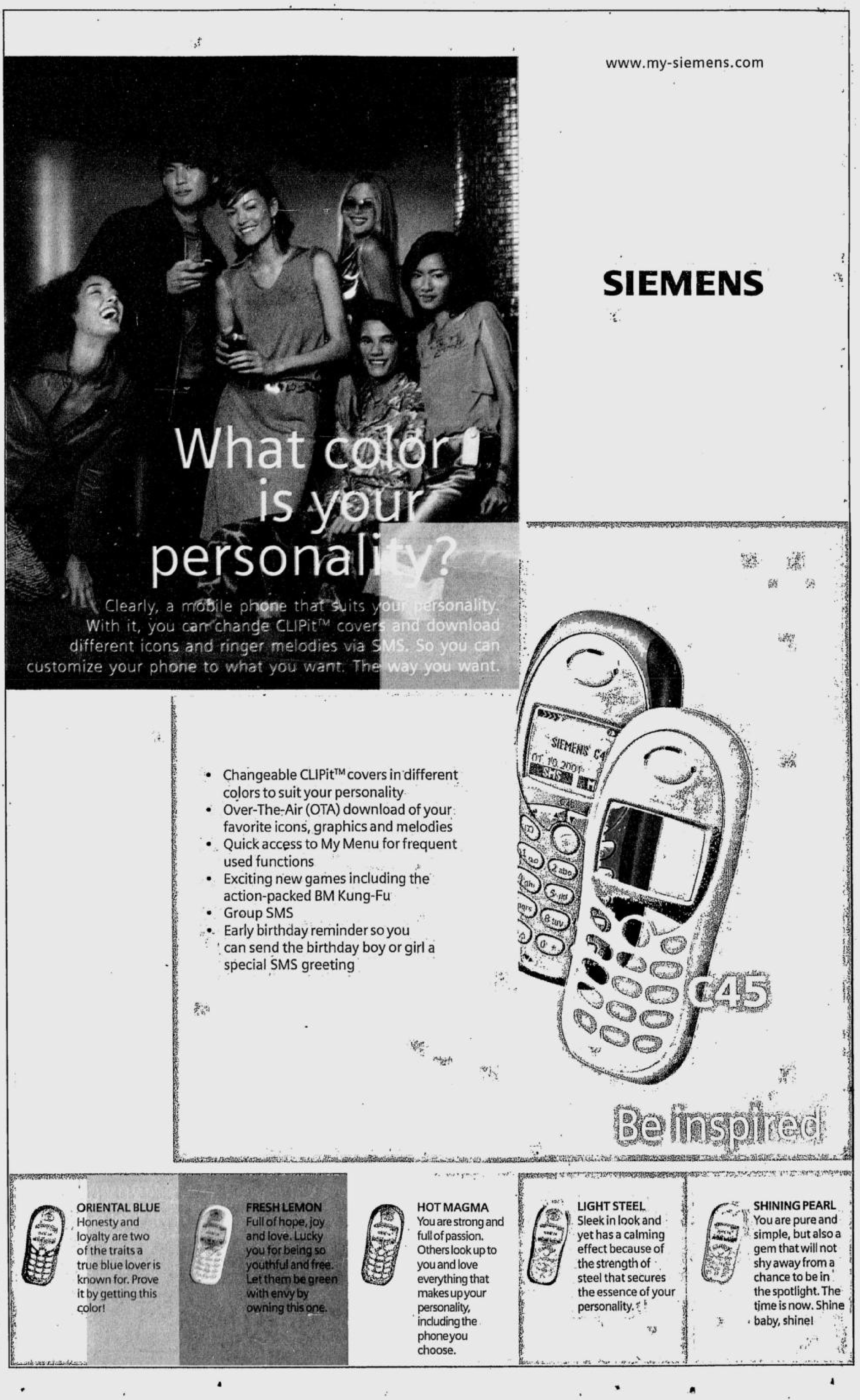
For a modern, more graphic spirit, there are contrasts, two-tone effects, contrasting strips and topstitching in sportswear (cycling shoes, slip-ons, city tennis shoes) and the new urban sandals with technical soles that suit boys and girls alike. The bowling spirit is still with us, but updated by new color schemes.

THE TAPPERED toe is a major trend.

Ethnic influences and the safari spirit are back: earthy, woody tones, hot colors (ochre and rust), Savannah khakis and chestnuts, beiges and browns particularly for sandals and outdoor wear with a boyish look.

Fanciful decorations are even more popular. Colorful, painted, patterned and printed in a playful or graphic style, the collections are fun inside and out, above and below: flag prints, graffiti patterns, pop art, brush strokes, printed or embroidered flowers and butterflies, deckchair or bayadère stripes, seaside prints and shell patterns.

FLORALS are in again.



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SIEMENS

What color is your personality?

Clearly, a mobile phone that suits your personality. With it, you can change CLIPit™ covers and download different icons and ringer melodies via SMS. So you can customize your phone to what you want. The way you want.

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- Group SMS
- Early birthday reminder so you can send the birthday boy or girl a special SMS greeting

C45

Be inspired

ORIENTAL BLUE
Honesty and loyalty are two of the traits a true blue lover is known for. Prove it by getting this color!

FRESH LEMON
Full of hope, joy and love. Lucky you for being so youthful and free. Let them be green with envy by owning this one.

HOT MAGMA
You are strong and full of passion. Others look up to you and love everything that makes up your personality, including the phone you choose.

LIGHT STEEL
Sleek in look and yet has a calming effect because of the strength of steel that secures the essence of your personality.

SHINING PEARL
You are pure and simple, but also a gem that will not shy away from a chance to be in the spotlight. The time is now. Shine baby, shine!

Shrine to gay pride or temple of tacky taste?

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Betoy Johnson

ARE you ready to come out of the closet and show your true colors? The country's only novelty shop that celebrates "sexual diversity" with such items as cutting-edge clubwear, racy underwear, eye-popping lingerie, gay literature and, hold your breath, vintage editions of the Miss Universe beauty pageant recently opened in Malate.

Playwright and safe-sex activist Jomar Fleras envisioned Pride Exchange, at the corner of Nakpil and Maria Orosa Streets, as an alternative venue where gays and lesbians as well as straights can find exotic merchandise not carried by the likes of SM and Robinsons. And you had better not dillydally. What you see is what you get.

As far as clothes are concerned, Fleras and the shop's in-house designers have agreed to limit a particular design to three: small, medium and large. Then there are a sizable number of

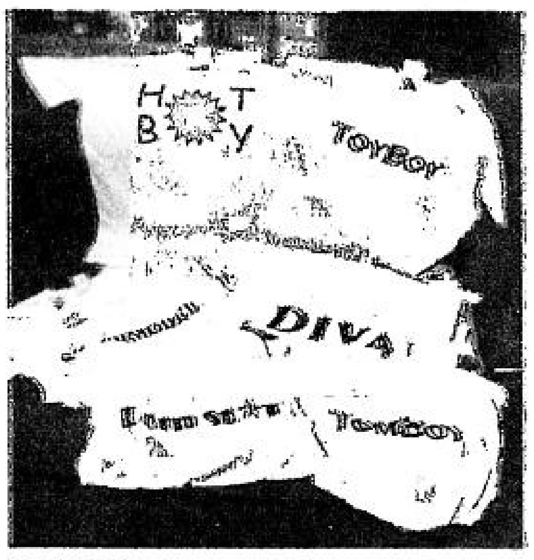
SHRINE/p.H7

Pride Exchange celebrates sexual diversity with a risqué line of clubwear, underwear, lingerie, and gay titles and videos

BUTTONED-DOWN statements urging safe sex

Angel Boi
Devil Boi
CLUBWEAR is world's apart.

BOUDOIR basics



T-SHIRTS with an attitude

WHOSE side are you on—George Dubya or Bin Laden?

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MOHAWK by Eric Faury of Franck Provost was shown at the "Hair Trends Forecast" show at Onstage theater.

Kadus, a leading European name in hair products, wants a new hair partnership among product, client and stylist

German house seeks new hair order

By Camille Cruz
Contributor

PRETTY Woman by Henry Calayag

NATURAL look by Manfred Speiring

PINTAKASI hairstyle by Fanny Serrano

A LEADING German hair-product company has entered the Philippine market after making its presence felt in 61 countries. With a full range of hair products, Kadus offers anything that a hair salon needs—from hair coloring to perms, hair styling and hair care.

Kadus products, which are available in selected salons, are the perfect partners to hairdressers. Kadus will train salon owners and employees on the best use of its products.

Hairstyle and color can change overnight. This is because influences are all around us, says Kadus' director for international business Wolfgang Doettinger. He says that inspiration does not only come from the market, but also from models, movies and everywhere.

Color changes with the trend. Coloring the hair is a sign of confidence and modernity, Doettinger says, adding that more and more twentysomethings are turning to hair coloring.

In Asia, the choices have been brown and ash colors. In contrast, Europe is partial to blondes, reds and mixtures of color. One person can wear up to eight different shades at one time without looking like the colors of the rainbow. This is achieved when the hairdresser is well skilled; s/he may, for instance, employ monochromatic blends of the same shade of color to put some discipline and design in the coloring.

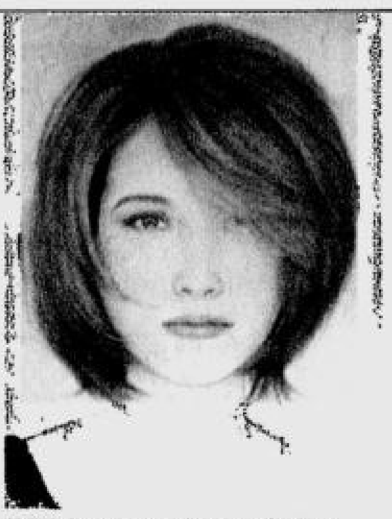
Kadus seeks to develop a partnership with clients and hairdressers. In the end, the hairdresser becomes the trustworthy adviser of the client. This time, clients will see results and satisfaction, not just performance.

SHORT AND SASSY. Pin Antonio (left) with models

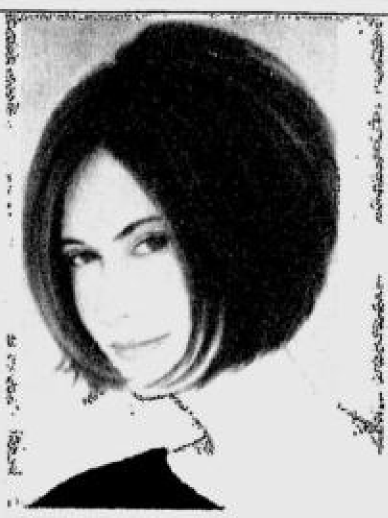
Holiday hairstyles

HAIR is loosened up and curled at the ends for a girlish stroke with the use Schwarzkopf's Osis Sherbet.

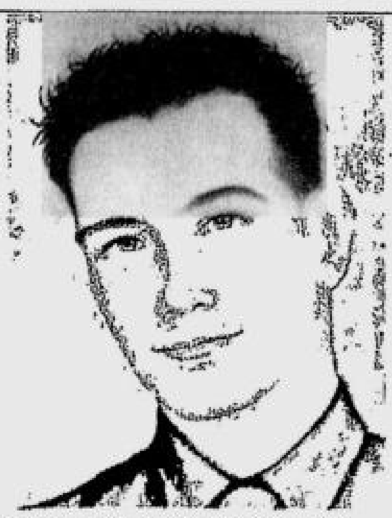
THIS Christmas season's hairstyles range from free-flowing curls to perfectly coiled perms. Schwarzkopf Philippine Hairdresser of the Year 2000 and Piandre Ortigas senior stylist Nikki Bacay created these perfect 'dos with the help of the German-based hair-care manufacturer's styling and coloring products to add a touch of glam for some serious holiday partying. Hair is loosened up and curled at the ends for a girlish stroke with the use of Schwarzkopf Osis Sherbet, while the modern twist takes on a raunchy flair with the help of Osis Freeze and Stick-up products. Barely-there makeup that highlights favored features completes the look. Schwarzkopf products are exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Top Style Marketing Inc. with offices at Eisenhower Condominium, Eisenhower Street, Greenhills, San Juan (726-8507 to 08 and 722-0278). Piandre Salons are located at Greenbelt, Greenhills, Ortigas, Del Monte and Timog, QC.



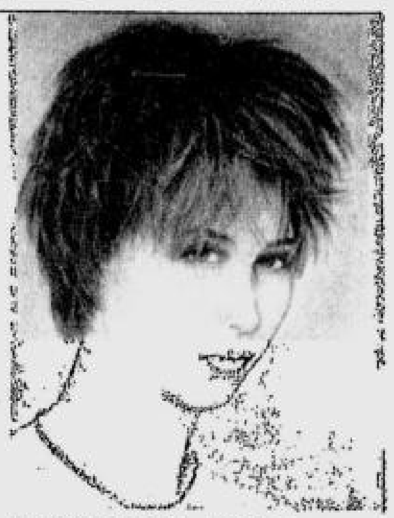
HOT layers and even hotter shade. Layers add over lift. Hand blow dry to boosts its dimension. Hair mask tipped fingers is used to define the good shape. Spritze with light holding spray to be sure it stays put all the way throughout the busy day.



THIS style has a definite detail in the highlights and in the middle. The cut is medium length at the nape, and angled forward for a chin length in front. Ideal for any facial shape, but most suitable for long and narrow face. For big or square face, one may put hair behind ears.



HOTTEST style for men with hottest highlights, a smooth and clean look for men. Another fingertip styling using molding cream. The shorter hairstyle is ideal for a corporate look for 30 years and older, while medium hair is ideal for teens and early 20s.



HIGHLIGHTED, layered semishort is downright sensuous. Short, shag-like touches in the ends, with the sides and fringey bangs framing the face. Although the look beautifully adapts to smoother, more professional looking finishes, it's the tousled styling option that teens and daring women like best. This hairstyle can be achieved by applying molding cream.

Hair-raising passion

By Nikki M. Meru
Contributor

HAVING problems about hairstyling and hair care? There is one expert who can answer your questions with fine sensibility—Tony Galvez, the person who, with influence, made the entire salon industry aware that cosmetology isn't merely a business or an art. It is a science.

Galvez is so passionate about his craft, his eyes sparkling as he speaks of the practice with such clever and captivating eloquence, compelling one to perceive that his fervor for hairdressing is as natural to him as his own heartbeat. He has mastered the ins and outs, the hows and, most importantly, the whys of hairstyling and hair care.

Armed with more than 30 years of experience and a love for beautifying people of all ages, he set up the Tony Galvez Centrum on 9th Avenue, Araneta Center. It is a five-story, world-class health and beauty center in elegant architectural style. The concept is aimed at busy men and women who seek to pamper themselves hassle-free.

Aside from the Tony Galvez Salon, the centrum will also house a slimming salon, spa, gym, dancing and aerobic studios, dermatology and surgical clinics, health and beauty related businesses, office space and ground floor restaurants on commercial lease basis to be catered by like-minded professionals in the industry.

Apart

What sets him apart from other professional hairdressers is that he never branched out. He said he attends to his clients hands-on because quality matters to him. He has established a personal relationship with them that enables him to really see what their needs are.

"Every head I style is an addition to my masterpieces!"

His clients are high-end professionals on the go. Galvez understands that with their hectic schedules and frenetic lifestyle, people have to attend to concerns that are more important than spending too much time in front of the mirror.

"They need a hairstyle they can easily do for themselves. That's what I give them," Galvez said. That was the prime reason he came up with the minimalist look.

Inspired by minimalism, he created the hand-blown style—one that is built on layers that create built-in texture, making the hair look full with a natural finish. Complicated as it appears, these fabulous styles are easy to achieve. "Once you get a shape that is right for you, just blow dry your hair using your hands as a comb. You do not need to use a roller brush to turn ends under. Then rough up your locks by applying molding cream, instead of gel, for high volume fashion or hair masks by Lakme, instead of mousse, for softer finish—to see how many different textures you can create with one shape."

Do not let the look's simplicity deceive you. That Galvez said "minimalist" does not mean dull or boring. To complement the shape, hair shading is a big factor. "The color makes you adapt to the times." He explained: "It adds sophistication and class."

He emphasized that styling and hair care should meet halfway. In other salons that use products harmful for the hair, that is impossible. Galvez explained the importance of carefully choosing the right products. "This is a generation of improved products. There are so many products sold in the market that would enhance the beauty of your hair without damaging it."

Asked about the future of the Philippine salon industry, he exclaimed, "Booming!" He added that Filipino hairdressers are not yet globally competitive mainly because of lack of education. He believes it is a must for the industry to professionalize. Like other countries, cosmetology in the Philippines must be a degree course. Only high school graduates must be allowed to take the course. It is his dream that the Philippine salon industry would become globally competitive.

Galvez has the heart to help his industry. He does it by propagating quality education. Tony has set up a school that teaches cosmetology according to a scientific perspective; it has given out scholarship grants.

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The Rotisserie

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ALL aglow in pink and magenta

Welcome a colorful 2002

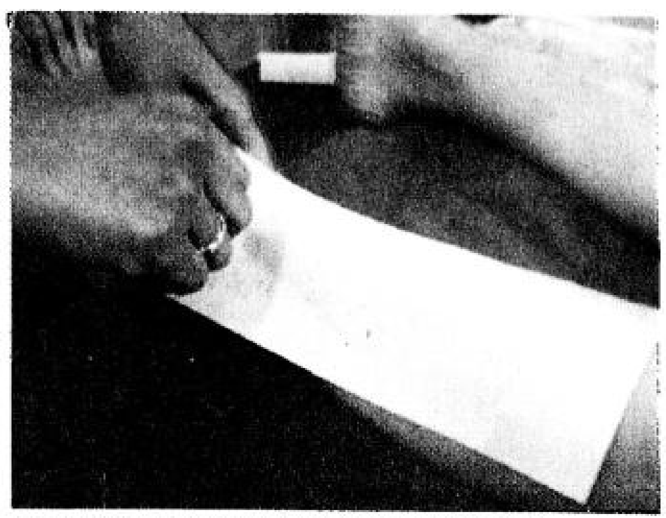
TOP hairdresser Ricky Reyes bids goodbye to the drab and dreary colors of 2001 and welcomes the rich hues of makeup 2002.

"The forecast is multirich, multicolors for 2002, because everybody wants to get away from the gloom and doom of the current times and project a happy mood," Reyes said.

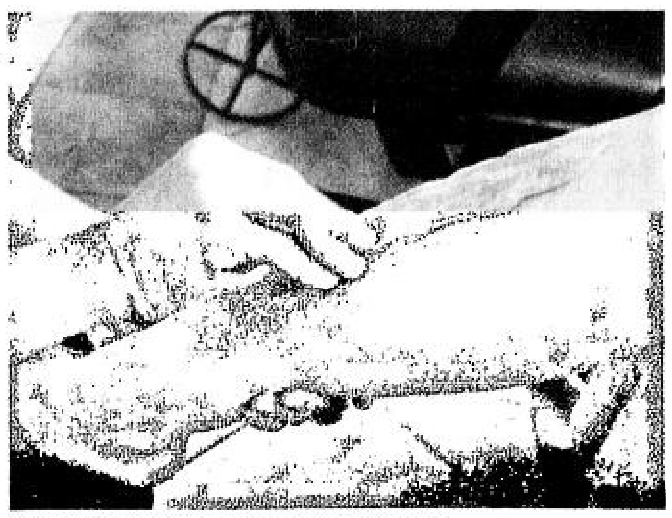
For the year 2002, according to the Ricky Reyes Salon, shadows will be in monochromatic tones of blue, purple and green. Makeup colors will be the soft, muted shellfish colors of orange and pink, and the tangy, natural clear orange color. As for lipstick, matte is out and shimmery pinks are in.

The 2002 look will be fresh, clean and adaptable. Ricky Reyes salons are located at all major malls in the metropolis.

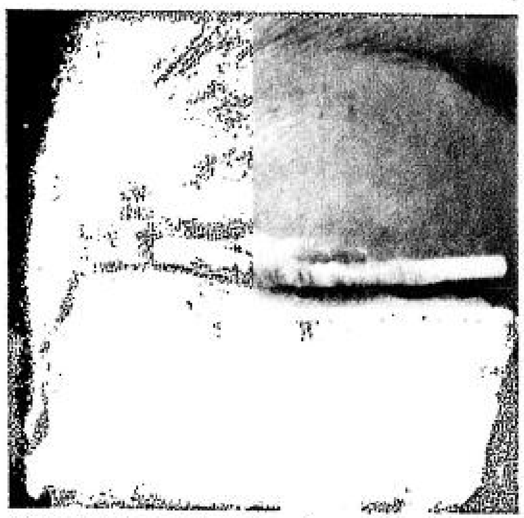
NATURAL orange blended with gold exudes vibrant floral hues on the eyes, shimmery pinks on the lips.



HOMEMADE wax from sugar and native lime



CONVENTIONAL wax using olive oil



EYELASH perming is safe

Blissful in private pampering

PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA

The Inter-Con's Kaffee Salon is the best place to indulge in hair, makeup and body treatments without being bothered

TUCKED in the second floor of a Makati hotel is tiny salon which is the city's best-kept secret. Unlike other salons that have become a converging point for Manila's Who's Who, Kaffee Salon is the place to enjoy the beauty ritual without seeing anybody.

Owner Stephanie Chung's tack is not to compete with other salons. Its main attractions are not the celebrity hairdressers or makeup artist, although the resident stylist Ce'Zar has worked in Japan and Canada. Hotel Inter-Continental's salon offers unique services, combined with freshly brewed coffee from Germany or Hawaii.

One of its main attractions is the eyelash perming which is gentle and hypo-allergenic. The perming is similar to having your hair curled. After the eye area is cleaned, the lashes are glued on tiny curlers and are wound up, depending on the client's wish—whether or not she wants a full curl or a natural wave. Waving lotion is set for 15 minutes, followed by a neutralizer. When set, the curlers are removed and the lashes are rinsed with a cleansing lotion. A stress gel relaxes the eyes. This process is safe for those wearing contact lens.

De-fuzzing

The salon is also known for de-fuzzing. It has developed its own formula that is done in the kitchen. The staffers run a ball of candy, made from sugar and honey, over the hairy area. The hair sticks to gooey mixture. The honey has a whitening effect.

If you want the conventional waxing method with strips, the salon uses a special formula made from olive oil. To ease the redness, tea tree oil is applied.

Threading is a Chinese method for extracting facial hair. In China, before a bride gets married, the amah or the grandmother removes her facial hair with white thread. This process lightens up the face. Compared with the conventional waxing method, threading removes the finest hairs. While most salons offer threading for neat eyebrows, Kaffee Salon removes moustaches and dark hair on the cheeks. To make the process nonirritating, fine white Chinese powder is applied on the face. Tea tree oil soothes the skin.

THREADING to remove facial hair

When the pores are open, the skin is ready for a facial. The hydrating paraffin facial is great for mature or dry skins. The paraffin treatment was originally developed in hospitals to treat arthritis and joint pains. From an aesthetic viewpoint, the heated paraffin infuses moisture into the skin to keep it young and dewy.

Basic facial

The treatment has all the gains of a basic facial, deep pore cleansing, exfoliation, extraction (a must for Pinoy rituals) and a treatment masque with an added touch of paraffin. The hair treatments are made from natural ingredients such as the relaxing chamomile, lemon for oiliness, ginseng for hair loss, bone marrow for fine hair or animal placenta for protein and body-building. The salon also gives one of the best blow-drying jobs in town. The hairstyle holds its shape for as much as three days—although most women would want to wash their scalps after 48 hours.

The staffers, dressed in white coats, are professionally trained. The therepeutic treatments such as the massages are done by a physical therapist and nurse.

Kaffee Salon serves Hotel Inter-Continental's guests who come for the boutique's bikini waxes. Since most of them are Europeans, they are familiar with the salon's products. It is yet to be discovered by the local market. Its services are as much as 20 percent less compared with other high-end salons. Kaffee Salon's numbers are 890-3372 and 815-9711.

Marge C. Enriquez

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ORTIZ

THE RIGHT pair of shoes could score big points in the corporate world.

For those wanting to put their best foot forward in the business world, corporate fashion guru Randy Ortiz suggests Brass Boot's latest styles, which are fashionable, yet sensible. "Your shoes say a lot about you. Wear the right pair and let your shoes do the talking... Brass Boot delivers the points," Ortiz said.

Handcrafted in Italy and Spain, Brass Boot offers the perfect shoes for those who want to make a good fashion impression while maintaining an image of authority and decorum appropriate to the corporate world.

For the working man, Brass Boot provides refreshing new choices that will allow him to walk through corporate corridors with confidence, comfort and style.

Brass Boot is available at Nunn Bush boutiques located at Ayala Town Center, Robinsons Place Ermita, Rockwell and other leading shoe stores.

THE BRASS Boot Cannor

THE BRASS Boot Lennon

Putting new foot forward

CARDAM'S, known for its quality footwear, is coming out with a young, fresh, exciting and fashion-forward new personality.

There are, for example, the embroidered leather mules, a modern version of the Moroccan sandals. Certain to add color to one's wardrobe is the square-toed mules in Indian sari fabric. And for evening, a steel-heeled open-toe stiletto, with rhinestone.

Even the men's collection now includes bowling shoes, boots and super-sleek dress shoes in sheepskin. Cardam also carries the imported children's footwear brand, Bambinelli.

Even outlets will have fresher, well-lit and spacious interiors.

Shrine to gay pride or temple of tacky taste?

(From page H4)

clothes that falls under the one-size-fits-all category. Pride Exchange carries apparel with probably the most outrageous cuts and materials this side of the world.

There's the see-through panties with nothing but the bushy detail to cover the woman's (or man's) private parts. They're perfect with a black sleeveless number with the word "Bitch" sequin-beaded on the chest. What about the skimpy, bondage-inspired black briefs with a zipper in front? Or the crotchless version for God knows what purpose? Safari-printed underwear are bound to bring out the animal in you. Grrr!

"Every gay should have one in his wardrobe," says a smiling Fleras, as he points to the store's wide array of kinky underwear. "But clubwear still make up the bulk of our merchandise." Sure, you could probably find these outfits at such gay districts as Castro, Soho and West Hollywood. That is if you're willing to pay the price in dollars or brave the din in Patpong.

Malate patrons

"Most of our customers circulate within Malate," says Fleras. "We certainly don't want them to bump into each other wearing identical outfits. By constantly coming up with something new, patrons keep coming back to us." Thus, Pride has also become a venue for young, nameless designers with neither the resources nor the patience to deal with big names. Hot Boy is one of the store's in-house brands.

"This place never seems to run out of new stuff," says fashion director Robbie Carmona, who frequents similar shops abroad. "Books, magazines, postcards, shirts, novelty items, you name it. Pride Exchange is a breakthrough that's bound to give Filipinos new perspectives."

"It's about time," adds Alex Mendoza, a software designer and Pride Exchange regular. "I love the range of merchandise and their consumer-friendly prices."

Lately, says Fleras, Pride Exchange has become a dressing room of sorts as well. It's common to see a gaggle of shoppers snapping up an item or two before changing into them on "*gimik*" nights. Anything for the customer. But the shop, believe it or not, has been attracting its share of straight clients as well. As a form of public service, the shop's personnel double as sex counselors to the daring as well as the uninitiated.

After all, what's Fleras in power for? As president of ReachOut, a non-government organization promoting safe sex and AIDS awareness, Fleras has been quite vocal about his views on such subjects, oftentimes ruffling the feathers of the Polly Cayetanos of the world.

Although Pride Exchange is distinct from ReachOut, the very ideals the latter stands for spill over to Fleras' latest venture. "We promote sexual awareness, not abstinence, to sexually active individuals. The point is to come up with sex-positive images."

This belief is very much evident not only in the merchandise, but in several head-turning touches such as a pair of anatomically correct male mannequins complete with you-know-what and door handles that every true-blue gay would love to touch. "This is a fun place," insists Fleras, "not a sleazy one."

Diversity

"Pride Exchange is an establishment that celebrates sexual diversity," says a sign by the glass door. "If you are offended by sexually provocative objects, then this may not be the place for you." Well, these people were obviously not.

A mature couple, for instance, went there to inquire about ways to enhance their sex lives. Matrons also frequent the place with their dance instructors to treat them to shopping sprees. Exotic dancers have found Pride an ideal source for their costumes. Recently, we chanced upon a male executive and his two subordinates, a male and a female, asking for leather corsets and hot pants. No, it's not what you think. The trio was scouring the city in search of ideal costumes for their Christmas party.

Of course, Pride sells condoms by the hundreds, some in handy key chains. If you look beyond the jumble of boudoir basics, you'll find dildos, vibrators, lubricants and penis enlargers displayed in a glass cabinet. If you ask Fleras, every bedroom should have at least one of these naughty necessities. "They're not sex gadgets but adult toys," he insists. "I draw the line at anything illegal. We try as much as possible to be gender-sensitive."

That means discarding anything that's homophobic and degrading to women. In Fleras' book, the Miss Universe beauty pageant doesn't fall in the latter category. Every Pinoy gay at some point in his life dreams of becoming one, he says. Gays can now indulge in their fantasies, back when Gloria Diaz and Margarita Moran held the now-elusive crown.

Yes, Pride Exchange carries VHS copies of the beauty pageant's 1969 and 1973 editions. But like all items found in the store, the offer is good while supply lasts.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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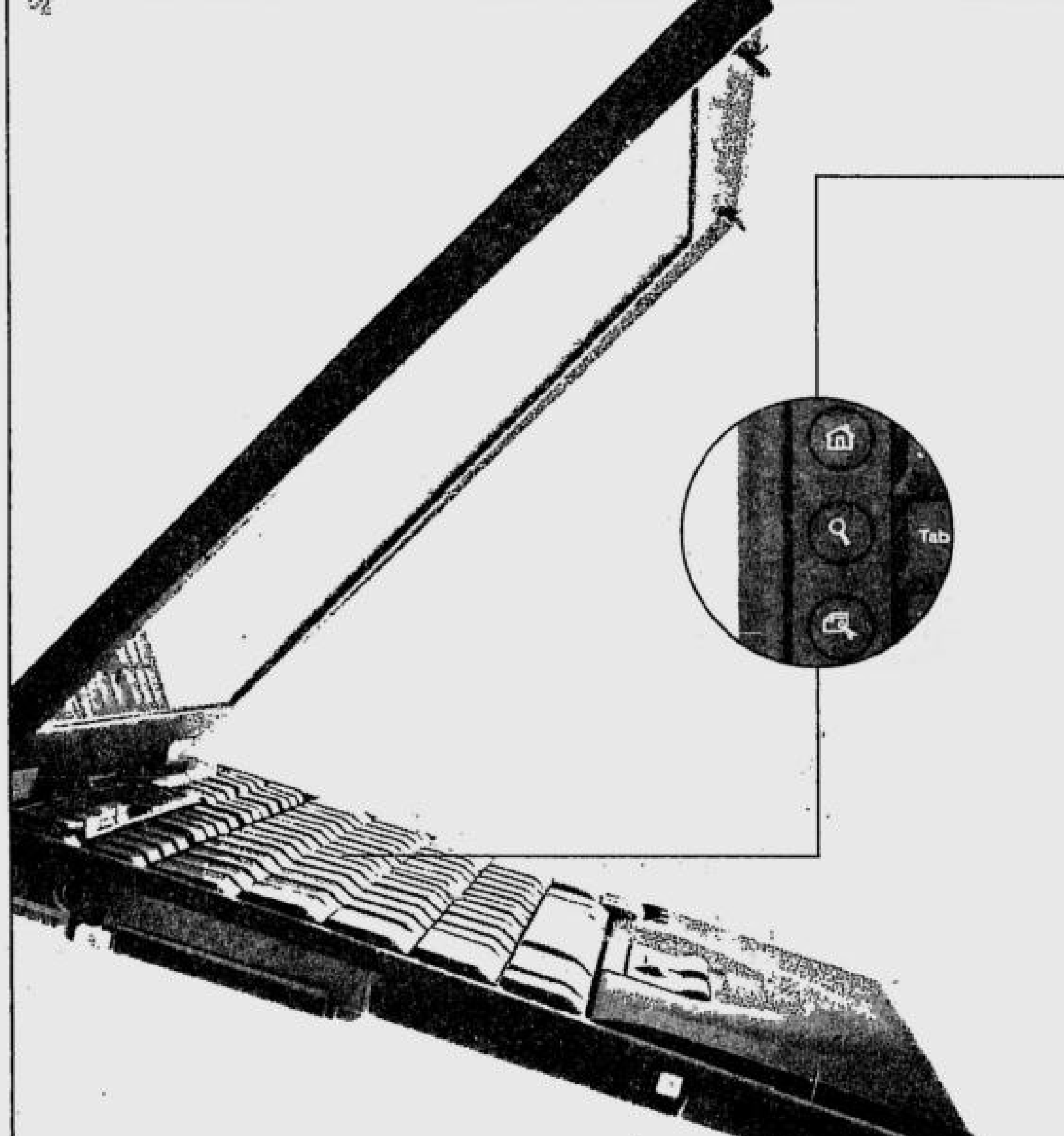

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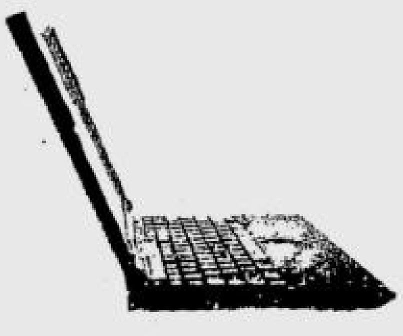

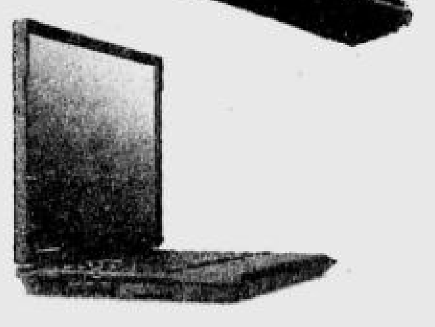

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On its 25th year, THE PROFESSIONAL GROUP *is now* TPG CORPORATION

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor
SPROJECTS@INQUIRER.COM.PH
AGGIE PINILI, Account Manager

MESSAGES

ALLOW me to extend my warmest felicitations to the officers, employees and staff of TPG Corporation as they celebrate their 25th anniversary.

It is indeed a tremendous achievement for a local company that has managed to stand tall amidst the presence of giant foreign counterparts in a pre-need industry. A quarter of a century in helping Filipinos secure their needs in health, education, life and pension is a testament of TPG's dedication and deep sense of patriotism. I hope I can continue counting on your initiatives to help government in its task of providing a better future for our people.

In this exceptionally trying time, we Filipinos need to cooperate with each other for our country to push forward. I am confident that by making essential services like pre-need more accessible to the masses, our march to progress will be a fruitful one. I encourage every member of your organization to bear in mind that your efforts in helping to secure the future of our countrymen is an undertaking shared by my administration.

I hope that TPG Corporation will persevere in contributing to our efforts to promote the virtues of good governance, responsible citizenship, social justice and sustainable development. Together, let us rebuild this nation towards greater unity peace, progress and prosperity.

More power and *Mabuhay kayong lahat!*

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

CONGRATULATIONS to the country's first pre-need pension plan company on the occasion of its 25th founding anniversary.

For a quarter of a century now, The Professional Group has been the government's consistent and valuable partner in both capital formation and developing the pension and pre-need industry. TPG has trailblazed the provision of products and services which has helped provide Filipinos with a brighter and more secure future.

We, at the Department of Finance, are pleased to know that we are not alone in our quest to help better our economy and improve the lives of our countrymen.

More power and Godspeed!

JOSE ISIDRO N. CAMACHO
Secretary
Department of Finance

CONGRATULATIONS to TPG Corporation on its silver jubilee.

For the past 25 years, TPG has been one of the leaders in the pre-need industry. It has continually played a major role in securing the future of Filipinos by providing them the best in pre-need products and services that lead to the realization of their dreams.

We, at the Securities and Exchange Commission, are therefore confident that TPG will continue to uphold the welfare of Filipinos and promote our country's intrinsic values.

To the officers and staff of TPG Corporation, more power and more success for the years ahead.

Lilia R. Bautista
LILIA R. BAUTISTA
Chairman
Securities and Exchange Commission

IT IS WITH PRIDE that we congratulate The Professional Group as we celebrate our silver anniversary—a milestone not just for the company, but also for the pre-need industry.

In 1976, Filipino ingenuity brought about the inception of The Professional Group as the first pre-need pension plan company in the country. Today, as TPG Corporation, we once again embark on another first as we launch TPG's Cooperative Marketing System through ProZinergy. This innovation creates opportunities for our planholders to be our partners in helping Filipinos build a better life.

May this pioneering effort serve as an inspiration to all of us in our mission of helping Filipinios plan for a secure tomorrow. With Tema Professional working together, there is no obstacle we can't surmount.!

Congratulations! *Mag-Buhay* Professional *Tayong Lahat!*

CARLOS R. ARANETA
Chairman
TPG Corporation

WE, at TPG Corporation, have always been proud of the fact that the concept of pre-need planning is purely a Filipino invention. We established the first pre-need pension plan company in the country in 1976, fulfilling the collective desire of Filipinos for a financially secure future.

Today, as we turn 25, we introduce another first in the industry—ProZinergy Cooperative Marketing System (CMS). This innovation stems from TPG's sentiments that in preparing for the future, we should not forget the present. In today's hard economic times, we financially empower our planholders by offering them an opportunity to save for the future while earning income today as our business partners.

With CMS and ProZinergy TPG reaffirms its mission of inculcating the values of pre-need planning among Filipinos. We believe that our driving force of "kusa, puso at asikaso delivered in a professional way" will make all the difference.

Let TPG be your partner for a better life!

FRANCISCO J. COLAYCO
President & Chief Executive Officer
TPG Corporation

First pre-need pension plan company launches another first

FOR TWENTY-FIVE years now, The Professional Group Plans Inc. has been faithful to its mission of securing the financial needs of the Filipinos.

Now known as TPG Corporation, the country's first pre-need pension plan company launches another first—the Cooperative Marketing System (CMS) through its brand Pro-Zinergy—a revolutionary way to sell pre-need products.

Revolutionary concept

"Pro-Zinergy CMS is a revolutionary yet simple marketing concept wherein the planholders are converted into business partners," says Francisco J. Colayco, president and chief executive officer of TPG Corp.

Through the CMS compensation plan dubbed The Paired Referral Incentive Main Exchange or PRIME Program, planholders earn in the form of bonuses by just referring people to become planholders also.

"This system is an easier way of earning for the family's finances since planholders only have to encourage people to secure their life by getting pre-need plans," Colayco says.

The PRIME Program is what makes CMS also a free business franchise. All it requires is one's own savings as capital to be able to have one's own Center Account.

Likewise, in this free business franchise, the planholder does not have to pay people to help him market the product. All he has to do is to master the duplication process, which means consistently producing a fresh new breed of planholders as cooperative marketers at practically no cost to him.

Phenomenal growth

"In less than a year, we have converted 20,000 planholders into cooperative marketers and have sold over P1. billion of pension plans in gross contract price," says Colayco.

Colayco says that by reaching out to 20,000 planholders, the company is able to help these people plan their lives and secure their future.

System guided by virtues

Colayco says Pro-Zinergy CMS is guided by three specific virtues—kusa, puso, asikaso—loosely translated in English as initiative, heart and concern.

"That's our driving force now—kusa, puso, asikaso—delivered in a professional way," he says.

Colayco adds that this is what the company wants to achieve—spread the news to all Filipinos that financial independence is within our reach, no matter who you are or what's your status in life.

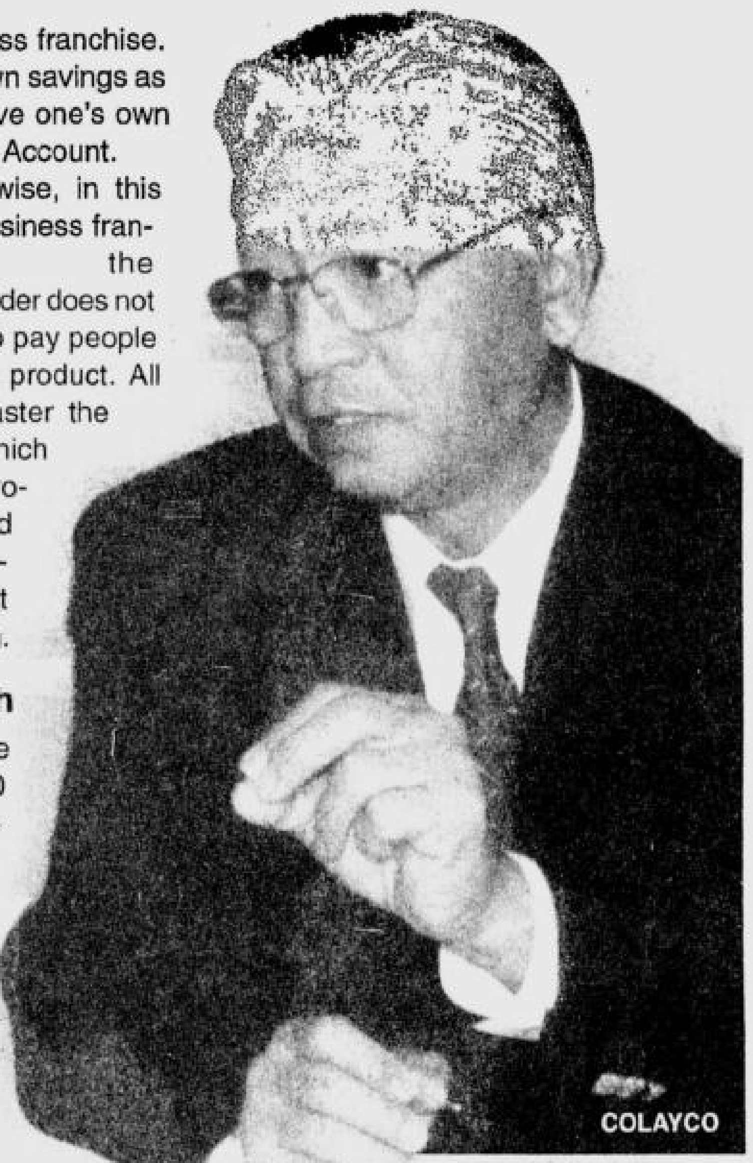
This way also, the Pro-Zinergy CMS is consistent with TPG's mission which is to "HELP"—which stands for Health, Education, Life and Pension—and represents the products and services being offered by TPG.

The Pro-Zinergy CMS is just one avenue where TPG reaches out to its market and helps its planholders to be financially secure in their life.

Perseverance paid off

The seed of CMS was planted three years ago. Years of nurturing and experimenting finally paid off.

"We're very, very happy and we're proud, and we would like to shout to the whole world that we've done it," says Don Bringas, TPG's senior vice president for business development.



COLAYCO

The current success being reaped by Pro-Zinergy CMS is spearheaded by the efforts of four goal-driven individuals who worked hard to venture the new marketing system—Zigfredo Morales, president and chief executive officer of Pro-Zinergy International, Gloria Morales, its vice president for finance, Edgardo Limjoco, vice president for marketing and Noel Angat, vice president for business development.

"It provides options to people in many places to improve their lives by being financially sufficient as the company's independent investors, while on the other side providing security for their life as planholders," says Zigfredo Morales.

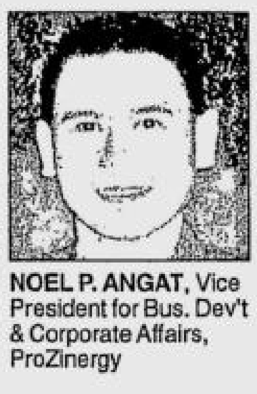
This resulted into changed lives and many families' success stories.

"I'm happy to hear people who have fulfilled their dreams. During our sessions, we have heard stories of planholders who no longer have to work abroad just to earn money for the family, of building one's own house, of kids sent to school, of having enough foods on the table," says Gloria Morales.

DONALLY B. BRINGAS, SVP for Business Development Division, TPG

PROZINERGY PRIME MOVERS

ENGR. ZIGFREDO C. MORALES, President & Chief Executive Officer, ProZinergy



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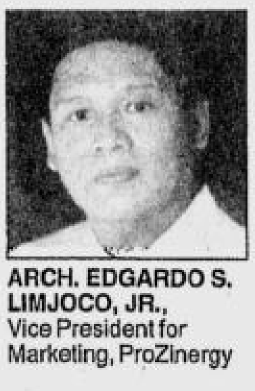

ARCH. EDGARDO S. LIMJOCO, JR., Vice President for Marketing, ProZinergy

TPG HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

TPG's asset base has grown to P4.4 billion and its trust fund to over P1 billion.

It has a network of 85 business centers and over 600 LBC airposts nationwide. It has over 18,000 sales associates servicing and more than 300,000 planholders.

1976 - Professional Pension Plans, Inc. (PPPI) was registered as the FIRST pre-need pension plan company on Dec. 22.

1986 - Professional Plans, Inc. (later known as Professional Academic Plans, Inc.) was established.

1988 - Professional Academic Plans, Inc., was the first to provide academic plans to the military market with the Armed Forces and Police Savings Loan Association (AFPSLAI) Agreement.

1995 - Professional Pension Plans, Inc. (PPPI) and Professional Academic Plans, Inc. (PAPI) consolidated to form The Professional Group Plans, Inc.

1999 - The Professional Group, The LBC Group of Companies and ATR Holdings Group formed a powerhouse strategic alliance providing planholders excellent, fast and guaranteed service.

2000 - TPG initiated worldwide distribution through LBC.

2001 - TPG launched the Pro Zinergy Cooperative Marketing System, another FIRST in the industry.

TPG Corporation attained ISO 9002 Certification in July.

TPG joined the Metropolitan Basketball Association (MBA) with the acquisition of the Davao Eagles team.

TPG and ATR acquired GE Life Insurance Incorporated, now known as Professional Life.

1976

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On our **25th year**, now as TPG Corporation,
we mark another first with the introduction
of the Cooperative Marketing System.
A program that bridges our planholders
to greater financial independence by
making them business partners.

Through TPG's Cooperative Marketing System, we are
partnering for a better life.

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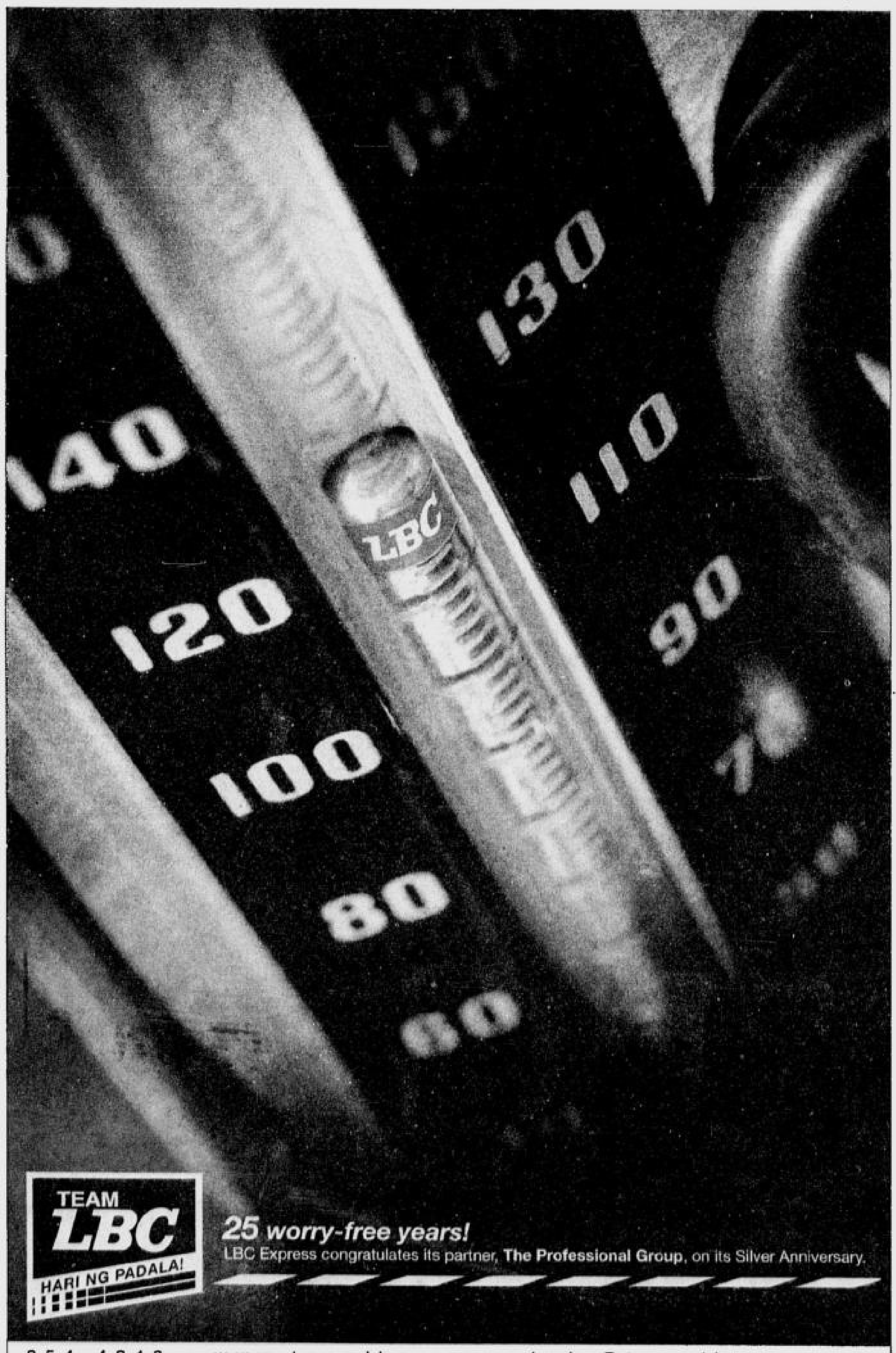

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TPG MISSION STATEMENT

The Professional Group is committed to enable every Filipino secure his needs on Health, Education, Life and Pension. **HELP is our Mission.**

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